July 20. 1665.

Imprimatur,

ROBERT SAY

VICECAN:

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The Nullity of the Romish Faith.

OR

A BLOW

At the Root of the

Romish Church,

BEING

An Examination of that Fundamentall Doctrine of the CHURCH of ROME concerning the Churches INFALLIBILITY, and of all those severall Methods which their most famous and approved Writers have used for the defence thereof;

TOGETHER WITH

An APPENDIX tending to the Demonstration of the Solidity of the PROTESTANT FAITH, wherein the Reader will find all the materiall Objections and Cavils of their most considerable Writers, *viz.* *Richworth* (alias *Rushworth*) in his *Dialogues*, *White* in his Treatise *De fide* and his *Apology for Tradition*, *Cressy* in his *Exomologesis*, *S. Clara* in his *Systema fidei*, and Captaine *Everard* in his late account of his pretended Conversion to the Church of Rome discussed and Answered.

By MATTHEW POOLE late Minister of the Gospell in *London*.

OXFORD,

Printed by *Hen: Hall* Printer to the UNIVERSITY, for *Ric: Davis*, 1666.

To the Right Honourable

ARTHUR Earle *of* DONEGAL *Lord Viſcount* Chicheſter, *of* Carickfergus, Baron *of* Belfaſt, *one of his* MAJESTIES *moſt Honourable Privy Councellors for his Kingdome of* Ireland.

My LORD,

HOw much it concernes every man to be rightly informed in the Controverſies between Rome and Us, is ſufficiently evident from the great importance they have in reference to our everlaſting ſtate: The Papiſts think the Proteſtant Doctrine is dangerous to Salvation; and the Proteſtants know the Popiſh Doctrine to be ſo: For although they uſe confidently to give it out to their Partiſans that their Religion is a ſafe way in the judgment of Proteſtants themſelves, and though in former times of ignorance God might wink at ſome members of

the Church of Rome that held the Foundation, although they built a great deale of Hay and Stubble upon it: Yet ſince the late Edition of ſeverall new Articles of their creed, and ſince the contempt of that clear and glorious light of Goſpell diſcoveries ſhining in the diſcourſes and Writings of Proteſtant Authors. I cannot (and I fear God will not) excuſe them from that hainous crime of rebelling againſt the light or with holding it in unrighteouſneſſe; and as Chriſt ſaid to the Jewes, they have now no cloake for their Sinnes.

What the portion is of the followers of Antichriſt we may more ſafely underſtand from the Teſtimony of God then from the conjectures of men; of them we read that *they ſhall be damned*, 2 *Theſ.* 2.12. That *their names are not written in the Book of Life*, Rev. 13.8. That *they ſhall drink of the Wine of the wrath of God*——and *ſhall be tormented with Fire and Brimſtone*——and *the ſmoke of their Torment ſhall aſcend evermore*, and *they ſhall have no reſt day nor night which worſhip the beaſt and his image*, Rev. 14.9,10,11.

The onely doubt is whether the Papiſts be followers of Antichriſt, or (which comes to one) whether the Pope be Antichriſt, which ſeemed ſo probable to the famous Lord *Bacon* that being asked by King James whether he thought him ſo to be, it was no leſſe truly then wittily anſwered

red by him, That if an hue and cry ſhould come after Antichriſt, which ſhould deſcribe him by thoſe Characters by which he is deciphered in the Bible, he ſhould certainly apprehend the Pope for him, and I deſire all Papiſts, who would not venture their Eternall Salvation upon uncertainties, to doe our cauſe and their own Soules that juſtice as to peruſe the Authors of both ſides *viz.* *Whitaker* and *Downham* on the one, and *Bellarmine* and *Leſſius* on the other, and then I doubt not but they will conclude the notorious weakneſſe of their cavils, or pretended Anſwers to our Allegations to be at leaſt an high preſumption of the truth of our Aſſertion, if not ſufficient to put an end to all further doubtings.

My Lord,

It is no ſmall evidence of a good cauſe and felicity of our Proteſtant people, that they are permitted to ſee with their own Eyes, and are both allowed and warned by their teachers, not to take matters of Salvation upon truſt but to enquire and ſearch the Scriptures and other Authors whether thoſe things be true or no, whil'ſt unhappy Papiſts like the *Andabatæ* of old muſt winke and fight, and are obliged with an implicit Faith to follow their guides in ſpight of Chriſts

caution uſed upon the like occaſion, *If the blind lead the blind both ſhall fall into the Ditch*, Matth. 15. 14. Proteſtant Miniſters beſpeak their hearers in St *Pauls* language, *I ſpeak to wiſe men judge ye what I ſay*, 1Cor. 10. 15. While Popiſh Prieſts, if they would ſpeak out muſt ſay I ſpeak as to Fooles, believe all that I ſay: A plaine ſigne their Gold is adulterate becauſe they dare not ſuffer it to come to the Touchſtone.

My Lord,

In the handling of theſe Controverſies I thought it moſt prudent and ingenuous to follow the Councell which *Benhadad* gave to his Souldiers, to fight neither with ſmall nor great, but with the King of *Iſrael*, and therefore I did not mind the branches, but have indeavoured to ſtrike at the Root: For ſuch is the Doctrine here diſcuſſed *viz.* The Doctrine of the Churches Authority and Infallibility and ſo it is acknowledged by all the Romaniſts, and we are adviſed by them (if we mean to do any good) to attaque them in this point. I like the Counſell and therefore have reſolved οὐν σὺν *arcem petere* to attempt their ſtrongeſt hold: All the Controverſies of the Church of Rome have (what *Caligula* wiſhed all the people of Rome had) one work, and that is this of the Churches Infallible Authority: while this

is

is ſafe, we do but paire their Nailes, and cut their Haire which will quickly grow againe, but if this failes, all falls, wound them here, and it goes to the heart. Whether I have done this here or no, I ſhall not be ſo abſurd or arrogant as to give judgment in my own cauſe, this onely I ſhall be bold to ſay, that I have faithfully repreſented the ſtrength of the Popiſh cauſe in this great point out of their moſt famous and approved Authors, and ſuch of whom it might be truly ſaid *Si mœnia Romæ Defendi poſſent dextrâ hac defenſa fuiſſent*, and therefore if all the plauſible pretences of their moſt conſiderable Writers be here removed and deſtroyed (which I willingly referre to the judgment of the ſerious intelligent and impartiall Reader) I may without injuſtice conclude that their Doctrine is indefenſible and their cauſe deſperate.

My Lord,

The reaſon why I devolve the patronage of this work upon your Lordſhip is not onely the conſideration of your reall worth and thoſe honourable qualities reſplendent in you, that true generoſity, ſincere friendſhip, obliging ſweetneſſe, impartiall valuation of perſons according to their merit, not their party or opinion in little things, and other conſpicuous vertues (which they that have

have the happineſſe of your acquaintance are witneſſes of) nor is it onely the known excellency and exemplary piety of your moſt Illuſtrious Lady (which nothing but ignorance or malice can deny) nor the particular obligations which I ſhall allwayes deſire to own to both of you, but the contemplation of that great intereſt, which by the high capacity of your Place, and the nobleneſſe of your Eſtate, and the unexampled affability of your deportment, you have in the Kingdome of *Ireland*; which how free it is from other Venoms your Lordſhip knowes better then I, yet ſure I am it is ſadly infected with the Poiſon of Popiſh Doctrines, and therefore I thought the Antidote moſt needfull there, and that your Lordſhips Authority and Influence accompanied with your zealous indeavours (which God expects and I promiſe to my ſelf from you in ſo good a cauſe) might induce many perſons of the Romiſh perſwaſion to read and conſider this ſhort Treatiſe, if God peradventure may give them Repentance to the acknowledgment of the Truth that they may recover themſelves from the ſnare of the Devill.

That God would encline your heart to contribute your moſt effectuall help to ſo good a work and ſucceed you in it and recompence you for it,

and

and that God would bleſſe Your ſelf and worthy Lady with all the bleſſings you want, and mercifully preſerve and Sanctify to you all you have, and crowne all with thoſe inexpreſſible felicities of another World, is now and ſhall by Gods aſſiſtance be the humble and fervent prayer of,

Sept. 1. 1665.

My Lord,

Your Lordſhips Orator at the Throne of Grace

MATTHEW POOLE.

To the Reader.

BEfore I come to the worke it ſelfe I know my Reader will require ſatisfaction in two things which I hold my ſelfe obliged to give in the firſt to the Proteſtant, in the latter to the Romaniſt. 1. *It will be objected to me as the Jewiſh Tradition, tels us was objected to* Moſes *by his Antagoniſts, who charged him with bringing Magicall operations among them, that he brought Straw into Ægypt, a country abounding with Corne: ſo it will be ſaid that I trouble the World with needleſſe repetitions, that I write an* Iliad *after* Homer, *and do that worke which hath long ſince been done much better by our Proteſtant* Heroes, *and that* Nil dictum eſt quod non eſt dictum prius; *and particularly that this point of Infallibility hath been diſcuſſed by that formidable Adverſary of Rome the moſt acute* Mr Chillingworth, Lord Falkland, Dr Hammond, *and lately by our Learned* Mr Stillingfleet: *To theſe my Apology is,* 1. *That the clamorous importunity of Popiſh Writers doth force us to theſe repetitions, it being the practiſe of moſt of their preſent Controvertiſts boldly to urge thoſe things in Engliſh as unanſwerable which they know have been ſo ſolidly diſproved in Latin that they neither can nor have pretended to Anſwer.* 2. *I have made it my indeavour as much as I could to avoid repetitions, which are as diſpleaſing to me as they can be to the Reader, which if I have in many places ſtumbled upon, it hath rather been the neceſſety of the thing or an unhappy chance then the choice and deſigne.* 3. *The Reader I hope will find*

find κοινὰ κανόνες: *If I had known of any Author, who had in ſo ſhort a compaſſe and plain Method contracted and diſſolved the ſtrength of the Popiſh cauſe in this great point, I had willingly ſuperſeded; nor did I intrude my ſelf into this work, but was invited to it by diverſe worthy and learned friends, and afterwards incouraged in it by the approbation of ſuch perſons, whoſe judgments I think almoſt all the learned part of England doth reverence.* 4. *Here is a new plea (viz. concerning the ſufficiency of the Teſtimony of the preſent Church and the Infallibility of Oral Tradition) not at all conſidered by Mr.* Chillingworth, *nor fully diſcuſſed by any other that I know of, (except the ingenious Lord* Falkland, *who handles it quite another way, and hath left room for ſome Gleanings after his Harveſt:) Nor is it debated by Mr.* Stillingfleet, *whoſe Adverſaries led him to things of another nature. And beſides it is known to diverſe, that this Treatiſe was prepared for the Preſs before Mr.* Stillingfleet's *excellent Diſcourſe came out, though retarded by ſome unhappy occurrences which it is needleſs here to recount.*

The ſecond particular is this: The Papiſts will pretend, that the Doctrines I charge upon them, and the Teſtimonies which I alledge againſt them, are onely the particular opinions of private Doctors, and not of their whole Church. My defence is this.

1 *The Authors which are here introduced, are not pedantick writers, but ſuch as are of prime note and higheſt eſteem in the Church of* Rome, *and the moſt zealous and conſiderable Champions of their cauſe, and ſuch (for the generality of them,) whoſe writings came forth with the character of their Churches approbation upon them, concerning whom it will be very difficult to perſwade any intelligent man, either that ſuch perſons did not underſtand the ſenſe of the Church of* Rome, *(as well as the Objector) or that they did knowingly contradict the doctrine of their Church, or would be permitted ſo to do without any cenſure upon them.*

2 *The*

2 *The teſtimonies of thoſe Authors are undoubtedly ſufficient for that end for which I alledg them, which is to ſhew the falſeneſs of thoſe doctrines, and the weakneſs of thoſe arguments which are disbelieved and diſproved by their own learnedeſt and ſtouteſt Champions, by which it may appear to all impartial perſons, that it is not the ignorance nor prejudice of Proteſtants, (as ſome of their VVriters have the Effrontery to aſſert) which makes them reject the Popiſh Tenets, but meerly the want of Truth and evidence therein, confeſſed (as you will ſee all along in the following Treatiſe) by their own Brethren, and that it is a deſperate madneſs in any Papiſt to hazard his everlaſting concernments upon ſuch principles, as ſo many of their acuteſt Scholars do publickly diſavow: And that this is really the caſe of the unhappy Romaniſt I refer thee to the ſubſequent Diſcourſe.*

POOLE's Nullity of the Romiſh faith.

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A Postscript to the Reader.

The designe of this Treatise being to destroy all pretensions of Infallibility in the Church, Pope, or Councels; it were an unreasonable thing for the Reader to expect Infallibility in the Printer or to deny his pardon to the errors of the Presse occasioned by the Authors constant absence. Such smaller errors as do not pervert the sence, the Reader will easily discerne. The grosser mistakes which he is intreated to Correct are such as these that follow.

For *work* pag.4. of the Epistle Dedicatory line the last but one read *neck*. Pag.8.l n.27. read *decision*.p.9.l.7.r. *Gretserus*.p.13. l.31.r.*rock*. p.14. l.21.r. *least*. p.33 l.17.r. *Melchior*.p.35.l.32.r.*their*. after namely p.39.l.15. r.*because*. *for best*.p.40.l.8.r.*least*.p. 45.l.26.r.*Cyrill*. *pro acquisces*.p.58.l.25. r. *acquiesces*. p.60.l.2.r.*Gresserus*.p.65.l.26 and 27.r. *had there*.for *by* p.84.l. last r.*of*. p.87. l.23.r.*Osius*.p.87.l.26.r.adde *with*. p.112 l 4.r.*fricat*.ib.l.26.r.*breaths*.p.116. l.10.r *Celotius*. p.117.l.32.r.*scrupulosius*. p.120.l.29.r.*affectione*. p.125. l.3.r. *Dullardus*. p.130.l.1.r.*student*. p.137.l.7.r. *discovers*. p.137.l 14.r. *Romish*. p.137.l 25.r.*recentioribus*. p.128.l.31.r. *niti*. pag. 155. the signatures to the citations are misplaced. p. 165. l.29. r. *answerer* for *thinks*. p. 171.l.20.r. *things*. p.174.l.33.r. *Apotactici*. p.201.l.antepenultimâ dele *non*. p.218.l.last. r.*protervire* p.218.l.31 and 32.dele *and to fetch in miracles that they may not want arguments* p.226.l.last.r.undeniable.

In the Appendix.

Pag.40.l 3.*after judg* read *each particular*. p.44.l. 30. r. *it is*. p.61.l.31.r. *effectually*.p.62.l.17.r.*Stillingfleet*. ib.p.31. r. *Smiglecius*. p.76.l. 20. *for perfectly* r. *in part*.

The Nullity of the Romiſh Faith

The Introduction.

All Papiſts profeſs to reſolve their Faith into, and to ground it upon the Churches infallible Teſtimonie and ſupreme Authority. But when they come to explicate what they mean by the Church, and on what account they ground their Faith upon her, then they fall into diverſe opinions. By the Church ſome underſtand the ancient Church, whoſe Teſtimonie is expreſſed in the writings of the Fathers, others, the preſent Church, whoſe living Teſtimonie, and Authoritie they ſay is ſufficient without any further inquirie: and this preſent Church too, they cannot yet agree what it is: Some ſay the Pope, others a generall Councell, and others the Pope and a Councell together. Nor are they leſs at variance about the grounds on which they build the Churches Authoritie. This ſome lay in the Teſtimonie of ſcripture, others in the Authority of the Fathers, others in univerſall oral tradition, others in the motives of credibility (as we ſhall ſee in the proceſs of this diſcourſe.) My purpoſe is to diſcover the rottenneſs of theſe ſeverall foundations as they make uſe of them, and to ſhew: That they have no ſolid foundation for their Faith in any of theſe recited particulars: and for more orderly proceeding I ſhall lay down ſix propoſitions.

1 *that a Papiſts faith hath no ſolid foundation in the authoritie and infallibilitie of the Pope.* 2 *Nor in the ſcriptures according to their principles.* 3 *Nor in the author-*

rity of Fathers. 4 Nor in the infallibility of the Church and Councels. 5 Nor in unwritten tradition, and the authority of the preſent Church. 6 Nor in the motives of credibility. Of which in order.

CHAP. I.

Of the Popes Authority and Infallibility.

Sect. 1. *Propoſ.* 1. THE *Popes infallibile authority is in it ſelf of no validity, and is a meere nullity further then it is eſtabliſhed or corroborated by the reſt.* This needs no great proofe. For if I ſhould ask any Papiſt why he rather relies upon the deciſions of the Biſhop of *Rome*, then the Biſhop of *Yorke*, the onely plea is, that the Biſhop of *Rome* is St *Peters* ſucceſſor, and eſtabliſhed by God in thoſe royalties and juriſdictions, which St *Peter* is ſuppoſed to have been inveſted with. But if I ask how this appears, what proofs and evidences there are of this aſſertion (upon which hangs the whole Maſs, and Fabrick of Popery.) There is no man ſo groſly abſurd, to believe himſelf or to affirm that I am bound to believe this barely upon the Popes aſſertion, that he is *Peters* ſucceſſor. But for the proof of this, I am by the learned Romaniſt referred unto ſome paſſages of ſcripture; as *Thou art Peter feed my ſheep*, &c. Unto Tradition and the Teſtimony of Fathers and acts of Councells, that have either devolved this power upon or acknowledged and confirmed it in the Biſhops of *Rome*: from whence it undeniably followes, that the Popes αὐτὸς ἔφη or naked affirmation of his own Authority (though delivered *ex Cathedrâ*, and with all immaginable formalities) is of no weight in it ſelf, and hath no ſtrength, nor vertue in it further then it is ſupported and demonſtrated from ſuch Teſtimonies of ſcripture

ptures fathers or Councells. Which will further appear from this consideration: That upon supposition, that the Scripture had been silent as to *Peters* supremacy, and the Fathers and Councels had said nothing concerning the succession of the Bishops of *Rome*, in St *Peters* chair, but had ascribed the same priviledges, which they are pretended to atribute to the Pope, to the Bishop of *Antioch*. I say upon this supposition, the Popes pretences would have been adjudged extremely presumptuous, and wholly ridiculous. From this then wee have gained thus much. That the Popes Authority and Infallibility being the thing in Question and but a superstruction upon those other fore-mentioned foundations; and not αὐτοπιστὸν, or credible for it self, that, it is not in it self a sufficient foundation for a Papists faith. And so that must be quitted as impertinent to the present enquiry, and we must go to the other particulars and examine whether a Papist without any reference to or dependence upon the Popes Authority or Infallibility can find a solid foundation for his faith either in Scriptures, Fathers, Councels, tradition or the motives of Credibility: And if I can shew, that the Papists according to their own principles cannot have a solid and sure ground for their faith in any of the now mentioned particulars, or if I can shew that all their other pretensions according to the principles of the most and learned'st Papists, depend upon this Authority of the Pope, and without it are no solid foundation of faith, that Scriptures, Fathers, Councels, and tradition, are not conclusive nor obliging to me to believe, without the Popes Authority and Interpretation (which I think will be made evident in the following discourses) then I may truly conclude that they have no foundation for their faith. Therefore I pass on to the second head.

CHAP. II.

Of the Authority of Scripture according to Romiſh Principles.

Prop. 2. Sect. 1. THat the Scripture in it ſelf, without the Interpretation, Teſtimonie, and Authority of the Church, is not a ſufficient foundation of Faith for private Chriſtians, according to the Doctrine of the Romaniſts: This is ſo plaine, ſo often aſſerted by them, ſo univerſally owned, ſo vehemently urged in all their Treatiſes, that if there were not an horrible perverſneſſe and tergiverſation in that ſort of men (who indeed by the badneſſe of their cauſe are forced to ſay and unſay, give and recall, affirme and denie the ſame things as occaſion requires, and the ſtrength of an Argument forceth them:) I might ſupercede from any further paine or trouble therein; I ſhall therefore onely obſerve two Principles of the Popiſh Creed, either of which (and much more both put together) do plainly and undeniably evince, that according to their Hypotheſes the Scripture in it ſelfe is no ſolid ground nor foundation of a Chriſtian Faith. 1. That a Chriſtian cannot know, and is not bound to believe, any, or all of the Books of Scripture to be the Word of God, without the Churches Witneſſe and Authority. 2. That the ſence of Scripture is ſo obſcure and ambiguous in the Articles of Faith, that a Chriſtian cannot diſcover it without the Churches interpretation.

§. 2. For the firſt of theſe, it may ſuffice at preſent to mention two or three paſſages out of their approved Writers. *Baily* the Jeſuite, in his Catechiſme of Controverſies made by the command of the Archbiſhop of

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Burdeaux, puts this Queſtion: (a) *To whom doth it belong to determine of Canonicall Books* ! and Anſwers thus, *To the Church, without whoſe Authority I ſhould no more believe* St Matthew *then* Titus Livius. When *Brentius* alledged the ſaying of a Papiſt; that if the Scriptures were deſtitute of the Churches Authority, they would weigh no more then *Æſops* Fables: the Cardinall *Hoſius* replies, (b) *That theſe words may be taken in a pious ſence; For in truth* (ſaith he) *unleſſe the Authoritie of the Church did teach us that this Scripture were Canonicall, it would have very little weight with us*: So *Charron* plainly tels us, (c) *That the Scripture hath no Authority, no weight or force towards us, and our Faith; but for the Churches aſſertion and declaration.* *Andradius* in expreſſe termes denies (a) *That there is any thing of Divinity in the Scripture, which bindes us to believe the things therein contained, but the Church, which teacheth us, that thoſe Books are Sacred, none can reſiſt without the high ſt impiety.* One may well cry out—*Heu Pietas, heu priſca fides !* To disbelieve the Scripture, that is no impiety, but to reſiſt the Church, that is the Higheſt impiety: To make God a lyar, that is no impiety; but to mak the Church a lyar, that is impiety in the higheſt. You ſee now the reaſon why Violations of the Churches Authority are more ſeverely puniſhed

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Doctor Jeſuita. *Ad quem pertinet de libris Canonicis Determinare?* Catholicus Papiſta. *Ad eccleſiam, ſine cujus authoritate, non plus fidei adhiberem Matthæo quam* Tito Livio. par. 1. qu. 12. (b) *Potuit illud pio ſenſu dici—Nam revera niſi nos eccleſiæ doceret authoritas hanc ſcripturam eſſe Canonicam, perexiguum apud nos pondus haberet. de Authoritate Scripturæ contra* Brentium Lib. 3. Fol. 271. (c) *Scriptura nullam habet authoritatem, nullum pondus, nullam vim erga nos & noſtram fidem, niſi quod eccleſia dicit & declarat* Charron verſ. 3.

(a) *Neque in Scripturis quicquam ineſſe divinitatis, quæ nos ad credendum, quæ illis continentur, religione aliquâ conſtringat, at Eccleſiæ, quæ eodices illos ſacros eſſe docet—nemo ſine graviſſimâ impietatis notâ poſſit repugnare.* Defenſ. Trident. lib. 2.

at Rome, then the groſſeſt tranſgreſſions of Gods Lawe becauſe there is more impiety in them, and ſo more ſeve rity ſhould be exerciſed againſt them. And *Pighius* uſeth no leſſe freedome, telling us (b) *That the Scriptures have no Authority with us either from themſelves, or from their Authours, but meerly from the Churches Teſtimony.* Thus you ſee, that according to the ſyſteme of Popiſh Theology, the Scripture doth not diſcover it ſelfe to be the Word of God, nor oblige my faith, unleſſe it bring along with it the Churches Letters of credence: And whereas in St *Pauls* dayes, neither Church nor Apoſtle was believed further then they brought credentials from Scripture, *Acts* 17.11. And S^t *Auſtine* in his dayes, in his Controverſies with the Donatiſts, batters down their Church by this Argument, that they could not ſhow it in, nor prove it from the Authority of Scriptures: Now on the contrary the Scripture is not to be received, unleſſe it be confirmed by the Churches Authoritie: And as *Tertullian* argued of old: (a) *God ſhall not be God, without mans conſent.* It is here, as in dealings between man and man; if I ſay to ſome unknown perſon recommended to me by one whom I know and truſt, I ſhould not believe your profeſſions of honeſty (for I know you not) were it not for the Teſtimony which my worthy friend gives of you: In this caſe, the mans profeſſions of honeſty are not the ground of my faith or confidence in him, but onely my friends Teſtimony. Or as if a learner in Philoſophy ſhould ſay to his Tutor, I ſhould not believe that to be true, which I read in my Book, that the Earth moves, were it not for the reverence I beare to your deep judgment and great abilities: Here it is

(b) *Scripturæ, niſi ab Eccleſiâ accepto veritatis teſtimonio, nullam, ex ſeipſis aut ſuis authoribus, apud nos authoritatem habere,* Lib. 1. Hierarchiæ cap. 2. (a) *Nec Deus erit niſi homini placuerit.*

plaine,

plaine, the reading in his book, is not the foundation of his faith or perſwaſion, but onely the reverence he bears to his teacher. And juſt this (ſay they) is the caſe of the ſcripture, to which purpoſe they alledge, and own thoſe words of *Auſtin*, (though they pervert the ſence) (a) *I ſhould not believe the Goſpell, unleſs the Churches Authority did move me.* Which if true in their ſence, then the Churches Authority is the ſole foundation of my faith, and without it the ſcripture is a meer Cypher or at leaſt not ſufficient to command, or ground my faith, which was the thing to be demonſtrated, The truth is, the Papiſts put the ſame ſcorn upon the ſcriptures, that the prophet *Eliſha* did upon that ungodly King *Jehoram*-- 2 *Kings* 3. 14. and beſpeake it in the ſame language --- were it not that I regard the preſence, the teſtimony and the authority of the Church, *I would not look towards thee, not believe, nor reverence thee.*

Sect. 3. If it be ſaid, that although the Churches Teſtimony was neceſſary before, yet ſince the Church hath long agoe conſigned the Canon of the ſcripture, my faith is now grounded not only upon the Churches teſtimony; but upon the ſcriptures Authority.

To this I anſwer. 1 That now as well as formerly, the faith of a Chriſtian (acted by Romiſh principles) doth not depend upon the word but barely upon the Churches teſtimony, which I ſhall make plain by an inſtance. I do not believe (ſuppoſing I were a Papiſt) the Popes ſupremacy becauſe I read theſe words. Thou art *Peter*, (for if I read thoſe words in *Tacitus*, I ſhould not draw an Argument from them, unleſs happily I ſhould fall into as merry a vein as *Bellarmine* doth when he proves Purgatory out of (b) *Plato*, *Cicero*, and *Virgil*.)

(a) *Ego vero Evangelio non crederem, niſi me Eccleſiæ commoveret authoritas.* (b) Bel. *de Purgat. lib.* 1. *cap.* 7.

But becauſe the books wherein I read thoſe words, Thou art *Peter*, is a book of Canonicall ſcripture, and a part of the word of God, there lies the whole ſtreſs of the argument. And this I cannot know, (ſay our Catholick maſters,) and am not bound to believe, but for the Churches Teſtimony: Which teſtimony, as it is the onely cauſe which makes the ſcripture in generall, Authenticall. *Quoad nos*, ſaith *Stapleton*, ſo it muſt be *that* alone, which makes this place: Thou art *Peter*, *Argumentative quoad nos*, that is, all the force that Argument hath to perſwade or convince me, is from the Church and not from the ſcripture, and the ſcripture makes it Canonicall to me, and its being Canonical, gives the whole weight to the Argument, and *quod eſt, cauſa cauſæ, eſt cauſa cauſati.*

Sect. 4. 2. It is not the words, but ſence of Scripture, where the ſtrength of the argument lies. And that ſence. ſay they, wee cannot underſtand, nor attain, but by the Churches interpretation, which leads me to the ſecond principle of the Romaniſts, viz. That the ſence of ſcripture, (which is indeed the very Soul of ſcripture, and the onely ground of faith, and Arguments,)is in many matters: of faith, ſo obſcure, and ambiguous, that there is an abſolute neceſſity of an Authentick, and infallible Interpreter, and Judge to acquaint us therewith, that is the Church, or (*per æquevalentiam Jeſuiticam*) the Pope. And it is abſurd to expect, and impoſſible to receive ſatisfaction of doubts, and deciſion, of controverſies, of faith from the ſcripture, which is but a dead letter, unleſs the Church animates it. This is ſo notoriouſly owned by them all, that it is needleſs to quote Authors for it. That which I inferre from hence is this, that according to this Hypotheſis, the ſcripture in it ſelf, (I ſay *in it ſelf*, for that is all the preſent Propoſition pretends to prove) is no ſolid foundation for my faith; and indeed, that it is a meer Cypher, which if your Church be

be put to it, may have ſome ſignification and value, but elſe none at all. And that it is not the letter of the Scripture in it ſelfe, but the Churches interpretation which gives weight to this argument. And this plainly appears from that ſaying, of their great Maſter *Stapleton*, which deſerves to be often men tioned, *in rei memoriam*, and the rather, becauſe *Grotſerus* (a) owns it and juſtifies it when *Stapleton* had aſſerted in his triplication againſt *Whitaker*, *c.* 17. that even the Divinity of Chriſt, and of God did depend upon the Authority of the Pope. And when *Pappus* had charged *Stapleton* with that aſſertion. *Gretſers* defence is: *that Stapleton did not mean that they depended upon the Pope: in ſe & ex parte rei, but onely quoad nos, in reſpect of us, and ſo* (ſaith Gretſer) *it is very true, for that I believe that Chriſt is God, and that God is one, and three, I do it, being induced by the Authority of the Church, teſtifying that thoſe books wherein ſuch things are delivered, are divine, and dictated by God*: (a) I deſire the reader to obſerve this as fully opening the myſterie of the Romiſh *Cabal*, and diſcovering the dreadfull tendency of Popiſh principles making the Divinity of Chriſt precarious, that the Divinity of the Pope may be abſolute and certain. And thus I trow the Pope hath quit ſcores with Chriſt, for as he was beholden to Chriſt, for his Authority, ſo now Chriſt is beholden to his vicar, for his Divinity: and ſaith hee, *it was truely ſaid by Tannerus* (*nor needed Pappus to wonder at it,*) *that without the interpretation and teſtifica-*

(a) *Defenſ. Bel. Tom.* 1. *pag.* 386. (b) *Rectè hoc ab illo aſſeritur. Addit enim* Stapletonus *divinitatem Chriſti & Dei pendere à teſtimonio & judiciariâ poteſtate Pontificis* quoad nos, *non in ſe, & ex parte rei.* Et paulò poſt: *Neque Prædicanti adeò mirum videri debet, quod à* Tannero *noſtro in Examine Relationis Hunnianæ ſcriptum eſt, ſine hac interpretatione & teſtificatione Eccleſiæ impoſſibile fore credere* (*ſupernaturaliter*) *ex ſolâ Scripturâ, Deum eſſe unum; eſſe tres hypoſtaſes divinas in unâ eſſentiâ: non eſt, inquam, quod adeò miretur & iraſcatur inſulſus Pappus, quia nihil à veritate alienum complectitur.* Defenſ. Bel. Tom. 1. in Append. 1. ad lib. 1. Card. Bel. p. 386.

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tion of the Church it is impoſſible to believe out of Scripture alone, that God is one, and that there are three perſons. Who is it that dare charge theſe Jeſuites with Equivocation? I think they ſpeak as plainly as their greateſt enemies can deſire: Here you ſee the meaning of that diſtinction *quoad ſe & quoad nos*, viz. They acknowledg the Scripture in it ſelf to be true and Canonicall, and it is a Truth in it ſelfe, that Chriſt is God; but ſo far as concernes me, I am not bound to believe either the one or other; but for the Churches Teſtimony, which is the very thing I am now proving and hereby granted, That the Scripture in it ſelf is no foundation of my Faith. And this is the more weighty, becauſe you ſee it was not an unadviſed ſlip of one mans Pen, but here you have it deliberately aſſerted and defended by a Triumvirate of Popiſh Authors, each of whoſe works, where that paſſage was, is ſet forth with the approbation of ſeverall Romiſh Doctors of principall note.

§. 5. But peradventure, *Quæ non proſunt ſingula juncta juvant.* Although, neither the Popes Authority, nor the Scriptures Teſtimony alone will, yet both together may conſtitute a ſolid and ſufficient foundation of faith; and the Popes Authority being aſſerted in, and demonſtrated by the Scriptures, is a ſure footing for my faith; To which, though it might ſuffice to object the circle (which is here moſt palpable and evident) yet I ſhall at preſent forbeare that anſwer, and referre it to another place, and ſhall here conſider, whether the Scriptures aſſert the Popes infallible Authority, as it is pretended. And firſt in generall, whereas ſeverall Texts of Scripture are pleaded by the Romaniſts, in favour of the Popes Supremacy and Infallibility, as *Feed my ſheep—Thou art* Peter *I have prayed for thee*——and the like: I demande whether theſe words or Texts of Scripture, in, and for themſelves, without the interpretation and teſtification of the Romiſh Church, do bind me to believe the Popes Supremacy,

premacy, and Infallibility, or no. If they deny the validity of theſe Texts, without the Churches Teſtimony and Authority (as needs they muſt according to their Principles) then it followes, that there is nothing in Scripture, conſidered in it ſelfe, that bindes me to believe the Popes Supremacy, and conſequently I do not ſin, when I do not believe and own their Arguments drawn from theſe Texts, and that the Scripture in it ſelfe is no ſufficient foundation for a Papiſts Faith: If they affirme it, then let all the Papiſts in the World give me a reaſon why theſe Texts *The Word was God*, Joh. 1. *He thought it no robbery to be equall with God*, Phil. 2. *This is the true God*— 1 Joh. 5. Should not in themſelves, and without the Churches Authority as ſolidly prove the Divinity of Chriſt, as the other mentioned Texts are affirmed to prove the Supremacy and Infallibility of the Pope.

§. 6. If they perſiſt ſtill to ſay, that the alleadged Texts are in themſelves a ſolid foundation for my faith, although ſuch an aſperſion is contrary to their univerſall profeſſion and overturnes the whole fabrick of Popery; yet becauſe I know thoſe *Proteus*'s will turne themſelves into all ſhapes, and indeavour to ſlip all knots, and becauſe I obſerve all their writings are ſtuffed with ſeverall Texts of Scripture, as if they would make their deluded Proſelites believe they made them the foundation of their faith: I ſhall therefore make ſome briefe remarks upon the chiefe of their Scripture allegations, in purſuance of the Propoſition under conſideration, and ſhew that the faith of a Papiſt hath no foundation at all in the ſacred Scripture, in the great and fundamentall point of the Popes Infallibility: Onely that you may underſtand the diffidence, which ſome of their own great Rabbies have in their Scripture Arguments, I ſhall minde you of a remarkable ſaying of Eminent *Doctor Pighius*, who perſwading his Catholicks in their Diſputations, rather to

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argue from Tradition then Scriptures, he breaks out into these memorable expressions: (a) *Of which Doctrine if we had been mindfull, that Hereticks are not to be convinced out of Scriptures, our affaires had been in a better posture; but whilest for ostentation of wit and learning men disputed with* Luther *from Scripture this Fire, which, alas, we now see was kindled,* as if he had said: You may as soon fetch water out of a stone as prove the Romish cause from the the Scripture: Oh the power of truth! Oh the desperateness of the Popish cause. His Councell indeed was good, but they could not follow it; for having once been fumbling about some Scriptures, though they saw well enough how impertinent they were to their purpose, yet having once begun, they were obliged to proceed, and make good their attempts (for of all things in the World, they hate retracting and recanting) lest they should put an Argument into our hands, against the infallibility of the Church from her actuall mistakes and errours in the exposition of Scriptures.

§. 7. The principall places of Scripture upon which the Popes Supreme Authority and infallibility is founded, are as follow.

The first is Matth. 16.18. *Thou art* Peter, *and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevaile against it*: *Ergo*, The Pope is Supreme Head, and Infallibe: I shall forbear *actum agere*, and therefore shall omit severall Answers allready given, and onely point at some few of those many allegations, by which the ridiculousnesse of this collection may appeare, and

(a) *Cujus doctrinæ, si memores fuissemus, hæreticos non esse informandos seu convincendos ex Scripturis, meliore sane loco essent res nostræ, sed, dum ostentandi ingenii & eruditionis gratiâ, cum Luthero in certamen descenditur Scripturarum, excitatum est hoc, quod, Proh dolor! videmus incendium.* cap. 4. Hierachiæ ——

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the deſperateneſſe of that cauſe that can find no better ſupports.

1. This promiſe concernes onely the inviſible Church of elect perſons, which appears thus, becauſe he ſpeaks of that Church againſt which the gates of Hell do not prevaile, but the gates of Hell do prevaile againſt all reprobates) and therefore the meaneſt ſincere Elect Chriſtian in the World, hath a juſter claime to infallibility from this place, then many Popes of Rome had (whom their own Authors confeſſe to have been reprobates.)

2. This promiſe ſecures the Church as well from damnable ſins as damnable errours. I prove it; The Church is here ſecured againſt the prevalency of the Gates of Hell: But the Gates of Hell may prevaile as ſurely, and do prevaile as frequently by damnable ſins, as by errors: *Ergo*, If therefore notwithſtanding this Text, Popes have fallen into damnable Sins, they may conſequently fall into damnable Hereſies.

3. The Infallibility here promiſed, extends onely to damnable Hereſies, and ſuch as lead to, and leave a man under the gates of Hell, and therefore if it were intended of the Pope and Church of Rome, Chriſt promiſeth no more infallibility to him, then he hereby promiſeth, and generally giveth to all perſevering Chriſtians.

4. This promiſe is ſpoken of, and made to the whole Church, and therefore belongs to all the parts and members of it alike: So that, if it prove the Infallibility of the Romiſh Biſhop and Church, it proves alſo the ſame of the Biſhops and Churches of Corinth, Epheſus, Philippi, *&c.* which may further appeare, thus; That if we ſhould grant the Papiſts their abſurd ſuppoſition, that this work was not *Peters* confeſſion, but his perſon, yet ſince the Biſhops of Corinth, and Epheſus, and indeed all the Biſhops in the World, according to this ſuppoſition were built upon *Peters* perſon, as well as the Biſhop of Rome,

and

and the infallibility ſuppoſed is here promiſed equally to all that are built upon the Rock, it muſt either prove all of them infallible, or leave the Pope fallible.

5. Whatſoever Authority or Infallibility is here promiſed to *Peter* is in other places promiſed and given to the reſt of the Apoſtles, and therefore what is collected from this place, for St *Peters* Succeſſors may be with equall truth and evidence pleaded from other places, for the Succeſſors of the reſt of the Apoſtles. The ſame Keyes which are here promiſed to *Peter* are actually given to all the Apoſtles, *Math.* 18. 18. and *Joh.* 20. 22, 23. And if infallibility be here promiſed to *Peter*, as much is promiſed to all the Apoſtles, John 16. 13. *He will guide you into all Truth.* And if St *Peter* be here called a Rock, ſo are the other Apoſtles called Pillars, *Gal.* 2. 9. and Foundations, *Eph.* 2. *Apoc.* 21. 14. And that 16th of *Matthew* ſpeaks not one ſyllable more of tranſmitting St *Peters* Authority to his Succeſſors, then thoſe other places do to their Succeſſors: And therefore it unavoydably followes, either that all their Succeſſors are infallible, or that St *Peters* Succeſſor is fallible, at beſt for any thing that appeares from this Text (whether the Popes infallibility hath other foundations we ſhall examine in their order.)

8. It may be ſaid, That although this place may not ſeem to be cogent to one that conſiders it in it ſelfe, yet if you take it according to the expoſition of the Fathers, it proves what it is alledged for:

But 1. The Fathers generally did underſtand this Rock to be not *Peters* Perſon, but his confeſſion, or Chriſt as confeſſed by him, and this you ſhall finde proved to have been the minde of St *Cyrill, Hilary, Hierom, Ambroſe, Baſil, Auguſtine*, yea, and the whole Councell of *Chalcedon* in that incomparably learned and Irreffragable Diſcourſe of *Monlins*, called *The Novelty of Popery*, Lib. 2. cap. 4.

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2. That the Fathers are not infallible guides of Faith and Religion I ſhall prove in the next Propoſition.

3. But howſoever, They that aſſert the infallibility of the Fathers, when they relate the Churches Judgment, yet allow their Fallibility in expounding Scripture: *Caietan* and *Maldonate* both acknowledge it, and practiſe accordingly, that a man may in many caſes preferre a new expoſition, though it be repugnant to the expoſitions of moſt of the Antient Fathers: And Sr. *Kenelme Digby* ſpeaking of the infallibility of the Fathers, expreſſely ſaith, he underſtands it *onely of the Traditions, or Doctrines, delivered by them as the Faith received from their Anceſtours, not of their Comments or Sermons upon Scripture, which are to have no more weight then the reaſons they give for them.* Letters between Lord *Digby* and Sr *Kenelme Digby*, pag. 10.

§. But if all theſe, and other difficulties were cleared; yet, do two things remaine behind, in which this Text, and all others are wholly ſilent, and for them they are forced to fly to Tradition, and the Authority of the Fathers, (of which in the next place.) The firſt, That all this Supreme Authority and infallibility, which they ſuppoſe to have been in *Peter*, was tranſmitted to his Succeſſor (and conſequently *Linus* St *Peters* Succeſſor was Superiour to the Apoſtle and Evangeliſt St *John*, which he had need have no ſqueamiſh Conſcience that can digeſt) and yet all this amounts to nothing, unleſſe another thing be proved, *viz:* That the Biſhop of Rome is St *Peters* Succeſſor; and here the ſcripture failes them, and the Coronis or Apex of the Argument (without which it is both impertinent, and impotent, as to the probation of the Soveraignty of the Roman Biſhop) is fetched ſolely from Tradition and the Teſtimony of the Fathers: And ſo their Argument ſtands like the Angell in the Apocalypſe with one foot on the Earth, another on the

Sea

Sea, one Leg of it in Scripture, the other in Hiſtory; and becauſe *concluſio ſequitur partem deteriorem*, the concluſion cannot be *de fide*; or rather to ſpeak the truth: The whole Syllogiſme is *extra Scripturall.* The prerogatives of St *Peter* are tranſmitted to St *Peters* Succeſſors; But the Biſhop of Rome is St *Peters* Succeſſor; where it appeares from what hath been ſaid, that neither propoſition is to be proved from Scripture, but wholly from Tradition, and that is all at preſent I am concerned to make good. And yet if all this were over, they have not done. Behold the miſery of a deſperate cauſe: for whereas it is known, and granted by the Papiſts, that St *Peter* had two Seas, he was Biſhop of Antioch for ſeven Years ſaith *Baronius*, and Biſhop of Rome, it muſt be further evinced, That the Biſhop of Antioch was excluded from, and the Biſhop of Rome inveſted with St *Peters* Prerogatives. And would you know the proofe of this poſition (which is the very Foundation Stone of the Popes Supremacy) You ſhall have the Argument in *Bellarmines* words (a) *It had its riſe* à facto Petri *from* St Peters *fact.* Peter *leaves Antioch and comes to Rome, and there he dies*, and ſo his Holineſſe got the day. Here I deſire the Reader to obſerve, that all the Faith of the Romaniſts, concerning the Popes Infallibility, depends upon, and is reſolved into a matter of Fact, and an uncertain Hiſtoricall relation: Nay, to ſpeak truly, there are ſeverall matters of Fact, every one of which muſt be ſolidly demonſtrated, before their Faith can have a firme Foundation. 1. That *Peter* was at Rome. 2. That *Peter* was Biſhop of Rome properly ſo called. 3. That St *Peter* died at Rome. 4. That it was Chriſts, or Peters intention, that Peters Succeſſor ſhould enjoy all his Priviledges. 5. That Chriſt or Peter appointed his Romane not his Antiochian Succeſſor to

(a) *De Pontificiis*, Lib. 4.

be this perſon, to whom ſuch priviledges were to be tranſmitted: If there be a flaw in any one of theſe, their whole cauſe in this point, is loſt. And all theſe are matters of fact. And ſuch is the nature, and uncertainty of matters of fact, that the Papiſts confeſs thoſe perſons whom they ſuppoſe infallible in matters of faith, are fallible in matters of fact. Excepitng that modern dotage of ſome of the Jeſuites, who have lately aſſerted the Popes infallibility in matters of fact: But that is ſuch a piece of drollery, and impudence, that their own brethren, who have not forſworn all modeſty are aſhamed of it: now to aſſume, as ſome of theſe aſſertions are apparently falſe, ſo there are none of them, but are diſputable points, and denied by divers learned men, not without a plauſible appearance of authorities and arguments. And if the Jeſuites opinion be true concerning the doctrine of probability, that a man may ſatisfie his conſcience, and venture his ſalvation upon the opinions of two or three learn'd Doctors. Then a Proteſtant may ſatisfy his conſcience, and venture his ſalvation upon it, that all theſe propoſitions are falſe, being denied by far more then that number of learned Doctors. At leaſt this muſt be granted, that it renders the forementioned poſitions, dubious and uncertain. And ſo the Papiſts build their divine faith upon a dubious hiſtoricall faith: yet again: what if *Peter* dies there? muſt the univerſall headſhip needs go to the Biſhop of the place where he dies, and not to another where he lived? *Charles* the fifth was King of *Spain*, and Emperour of *Germany*; if he die in *Spain*, muſt all the Kings of *Spain* be therefore Emperours of *Germany*? Haply they will ſay no, becauſe the Empire is elective, not hereditary; and if that were granted, which the Papiſts will never be able to prove, that there was ſuch a thing as this univerſall headſhip, and that this was to continue, will they pawne their ſoules on it, (for ſo indeed they do) that this

universall headship was hereditary, not elective? How will they prove it? *Christ* dies at *Jerusalem*, by this rule the Bishop of *Jerusalem* must be universall head: Suppose the Pope should leave *Rome*, and go to *Avignon*, (as once he did) and settle, and die there, by this rule, the Bishop of *Avignon* must succeed in the universall headship But I need say no more of so absurd a fancy.

Sect. 10. A second place of scripture is, *Joh.* 21. *Peter feed my sheep*; And this feeding must denote ruling as well as teaching, and this rule (forsooth) must needs be the supreme power, and that power must bee attended with infallibility, and these sheep must be all the sheep in the world, nay, shephards too, except the Pan, or *princeps pastorum* at *Rome*. *Tanta molis erat Romanum condere papam.* And this rope of sand must be called an argument, by which one may see the intollerable confidence they have in themselves and their shameless contempt of the Readers, whom they think obliged to receive all their dictates without enquiry. I would have you to wit that the Church of *Rome* knew what they did, when they invented the doctrine of an implicit faith and a blind obedience to all the Churches decrees, for if men should once dare to open their eyes and examine their assertions, all their craft would be in danger to be set at nought, and the Temple of *Dominus Deus noster papa*, (as the Canon Law calls him) would be despised and his magnificence would be destroyed, whom so great a part of the world worshippeth. But if indeed they will by Transubstantiation turn this handfull of straw into a pillar of their Church, (as I cannot blame one near drowning, for catching at every twig) then I shall offer these things to their consideration.

1 That *Bellarmine* (as his manner is) bestowes seaven arguments to prove that which none ever denied, that those words were spoken to *Peter* alone, and neglects

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that which he ſhould have diſproved *viz.* the reaſon thereof given by *Aug. Cyril, Ambroſe*, and others; and after them the Proteſtants which was, not the collation of a new dignity ſuperior to that of the other Apoſtles, but his reſtoration to his former dignity of the Apoſtleſhip, from which by his great tranſgreſſion he might ſeem to have fallen as *Judas* really did fall by his Tranſgreſſion *Act.* 1.

2. If this Text afford them any ſupport, they muſt have it either from the *Act*, or the word *Feed*, or from the object or phraſe, *my ſheep*: For the firſt, By what Arts can the Supremacy of the Pope be drawn from that word or precept? This feeding (in the judgment of the Romaniſts themſelves) implies nothing but teaching and ruling, and both thoſe are aſcribed to all the Apoſtles without any diſcrimination, *Mat.* 28.19,20. *Mat.* 18. *John.* 20. And *Bellarmine* himſelfe confeſſeth, that *not onely the power of Rule, but the ſupreme power was conferred upon all the Apoſtles*: (a) Nay, they are aſcribed to inferiour Miniſters *Heb.* 13. *Obey them that have the rule over you*; and 1 Tim. 5.17. *The elders that rule well*; and to ſuch, the very ſame Precept is given, 1 *Pet.* 5.1,2. The Elders —I exhort —*Feed the flock of God which is among you*: Doth Feeding in one place argue ſuperiority, and in another place imply ſubjection? or rather in both places it ſeemes it ſignifies what the Pope pleaſeth; But you muſt know the Romiſh Doctors having called the Scripture a Lesbian Rule, and a Noſe of Wax,—they were bound in honour *aut invenire aut facere*, either to finde it ſo, or to make it ſuch; if it be ſaid their charge is limited to the Flock of God among them, whereas *Peters* extends to all the ſheep; the Anſwer is eaſie, if that be granted, for then the difference doth not lie in the

(a) *Lib. de Pontifice Romano*, lib. 1. cap. 12. §. *at autem.*

act of Feeding, but in the object of which I now come to ſpeak, that is the ſecond thing; the phraſe *my ſheep*:

Granting therefore what *Bellar.* deſires that he ſpeaks of all the ſheep, yet herein St *Peter* had no prerogative above the other Apoſtles who are equally commanded to teach and baptiſe all Nations *Mat.*28.19. to preach the Goſpel to every Creature, *Mar.*16.15. And *Peters* Dioceſs ſurely cannot be larger, unleſſe happily *Utopia* be taken in, or that which is in the ſame part of the world, I meane Purgatory: But you will ſay, ſurely they have ſomewhat elſe to plead for themſelves from this Text; Why yes, Theſe good maſters of the feaſt have reſerved the beſt Wine to the laſt. Here comes in a rare notion not fit to be proſtituted to vulgar apprehenſions, you ſhall heare it upon condition you will not put them to the prooſe of it which they are not bound to do, for *nemo tenetur ad impoſſibilia*, *No man is obliged to do more then is in his power*; *Peter* was to feed the ſheep as ordinary Paſtour, the reſt as extraordinary Ambaſſadors and with a certaine ſubjection to *Peter*, (a) If you ask, doth this Text ſay ſo? or any other Text? or is there one ſyllable from whence this may be deduced? you muſt remember the condition which I told you. And what if this be granted, how comes the ordinary power to be greater and higher then the extraordinary? In the Old Teſtament generally, the extraordinary officers, the Prophets whom God raiſed were ſuperior to the Prieſts. And in the New Teſtament, the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts who were extraordinary officers were ſuperior to Paſtors and Teachers, which are the ordinary. How come the

(a) *Ut autem intelligeremus hanc ſummam poteſtatem collatam Apoſtolis omnibus, ut legatis, non ut paſtoribus ordinariis & cum quâdam ſubjectione ad* Petrum. *Bel de Romano Pontifice* lib.1. cap.12.

Table

Tables to be turned? and the ordinary agent to be advanced above the extraordinary Ambaſſadors? And what if all this be granted it edifies nothing unleſſe two things be ſuperadded, of both which the Scripture is wholly ſilent and their proof failes them. 1. They muſt prove that this power of feeding is tranſmitted to *Peters* Succeſſors in a more peculiar manner, then to the Succeſſors of the other Apoſtles, and that whatever power *Peter* had is depoſited in their hand. 2. That the Pope is this Succeſſor to whom theſe things are concredited. And theſe they do not pretend to prove from Scripture So that ſtill the concluſion remaines intire, That the Scripture is not to the Papiſts a ſolid and ſure ground of Faith.

§. 11. A third place alwaies in their mouths is *Luke* 22. 31. *Simon, Simon, Satan hath deſired to winnow you, but I have prayed that thy faith faile not.* A man would not believe it he did not ſee it with his own eyes that ſuch Learned men as diverſe of the Papiſts are ſhould put any confidence in ſuch broken reeds and ſhatter'd Arguments as this is. Truely ſaith a learned man, *Hoc non eſt diſputare ſed ſomniare*: This is rather a dreame, then an Argument: What thoughts the Papiſts have of our Engliſh Sectaries is ſufficiently known; but I muſt needs do them this right to profeſſe, I do not know that Sect among us (the Quakers excepted) ſo abſurd and impertinent in the allegations of Scripture for their moſt irrationall opinions as in ſundry particulars (and this eſpecially) the Papiſts are. But becauſe they ſhall not complaine of us (as we do juſtly of them) that we rather condemne them then confute them, I ſhall ſhew the ridiculouſneſſe of this allegation to their purpoſe.

1. If this Prayer ſecure the Pope from unbelieſe and errour in judgment, it ſecures him alſo from unbelieſe and Apoſtacy in heart and life: But this Prayer doth

not ſecure the Pope from Apoſtacy in heart and life. The Papiſts generally confeſſe that ſeverall of their Popes were *Apoſtatici non Apoſtolici Apoſtates*, not Apoſtolick perſons. All the doubt lies about the Major, which I prove thus; If this Prayer was put up for *Peter* in the name and on the behalfe of his Succeſſors as well as himſelfe (as the Papiſts pretend it was though we denie it) then the ſame thing for which Chriſt prayes for *Peter*, Chriſt Prayes for it for his Succeſſors alſo, and therefore if Chriſt prayed that *Peter* might be kept from Apoſtacy in heart and life as well as in opinion and judgment, then the Major is true. But Chriſt prayed that *Peter* might be ſo kept, which I thus prove. Chriſts Prayer was the Antidote againſt the Devils malicious deſigne; *Satan hath deſired to winnow you, but I have prayed* &c. And conſequently the plaiſter muſt be as large as the ſore: But the Devils deſigne was not only to draw *Peter* to error in judgment, but alſo, yea principally to draw him to Apoſtacy in heart and life. *Ergo.*

2. If notwithſtanding this Prayer it was poſſible, that *Peter* himſelf might fall ſo farre after Chriſt's Prayer, as to teach a falſe Doctrine; then this Prayer doth not prove the Popes infallibility. But notwithſtanding this Prayer, it was poſſible that *Peter* might fall ſo far as to teach a falſe Doctrine. The Minor (which alone needs proofe) I prove thus, He that believed a falſe Doctrine, might preach a falſe doctrine; but *Peter* after this prayer did believe a falſe doctrine which plainly apeares from *Acts* 1.6. *Wilt thou at this time reſtore the Kingdome to Iſrael?* by which it is evident and the Popiſh expoſitions confeſſe it) that the Apoſtles (and *Peter* with them) ſtill retained the old leaven of the beliefe of a Temporal Monarchy of Chriſt upon earth, (a Doctrine which the Papiſts themſelves condemne in the Millenaries) Nor was this (the onely miſtake of *Peter* or the Apoſtles after that Prayer. And indeed

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it was not Chriſts Prayer, but the gift of the Holy Ghoſt after his death which did ſecure the Apoſtles from errour, and us from deceit, in following their Doctrines.

3. If Chriſts Prayer for the not failing of *Peters* faith render the Pope infallible, then St *Pauls* Prayer for the Theſſalonians, *I pray God your whole Spirit, Soule and Body be preſerved blameleſſe, unto the comming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Theſ. 5.23. and for the Philippians, *That they might abound in knowledge _____ and approve things that are excellent, that they might be ſincere, and without offence, till the day of Chriſt*, Philip. 1.9. prove the infallibility, yea, the impeccability of the Theſſalonians, and the Philippians. The reaſon is this; becauſe St *Pauls* Prayer being infallibly dictated by Gods Spirit, and made according to his Word, and in Chriſts name muſt as ſurely be anſwered, as Chriſts Prayer was, for God who cannot lie hath promiſed to anſwer ſuch Prayers.

4. If the Prayer of Chriſt for the perſeverance of Faith, makes him infallible for whom Chriſt prayes, then all elect and perſevering believers are infallible. The conſequence appeares thus; Becauſe Chriſt did pray, and doth intercede for the perſeverance of the Faith of every ſuch perſon. Chriſt expreſſely tels us, Joh. 17. *I pray not for theſe alone, but for them alſo which ſhall believe on me through their word.* And there is not one perſevering Chriſtian in the World, but owes his perſeverance to the Prayer, care, and interceſſion of Chriſt: Hence they are ſaid to be preſerved in Chriſt Jeſus *Jude* 1. 1. And therefore either this Argument concludes, not for the Popes infallibility, or elſe it gives him ten thouſand partners in that priviledge. And ſurely, if the prayer for this mercy makes the Pope infallible, much more doth the actuall donation of this mercy make believers infallible.

5. This Prayer was intended for the other Apoſtles, as well as *Peter* (though Chriſt ſpeak to *Peter* in the name

of the reſt, as his manner was as evidently appears from hence. Chriſt prayes for thoſe, whom the Divell deſires to winnow. That is plaine from the words, *Satan hath deſired to winnow you, but I have prayed* —— But the Devils aime was, not onely againſt *Peter* but the reſt of the Apoſtles, as Chriſt expreſſely tels us ἐξητήσατο not σε *thee* but ὑμᾶς *you* in the plurall number. And therefore it followes, that as the diſeaſe and danger was generall and common to all the Apoſtles, ſo was that reliefe and ſuccour, which Chriſt here afforded, and conſequently all the Apoſtles are intereſted in this promiſe, and therefore either it makes not the ſucceſſors of *Peter* infallible, or elſe it makes all the ſucceſſours of all the Apoſtles infallible, let them chuſe which they will.

6. And yet if all thoſe difficulties be overcome, the Concluſion may be granted, without any advantage to their cauſe. For, what if Chriſt prayed for *Peter* alone? What if this prayer intended and procured infallibility for him? *Quid hoc ad Iphicli boves?* What is this to the Pope? What Scripture, what Father, what man (that is not wholly mancipated to the Popes ambitious humour) will ſay or can prove that the Pope is intereſted in all the prayers of Chriſt for *Peter*? Or why may not all the ſucceſſours of the other Apoſtles upon as good grounds claime an intereſt in that prayer of Chriſt for the infallibility of all the Apoſtles *Joh.* 17? (For ſure I am thoſe prayers of Chriſt that God would *keep them through his own name*, v. 11. *keep them from evill*, v. 15. *ſanctify them thorough his truth and keep them unto glory*, v. 21, 22, 23, 24. do as fully imply infallibility as this that *Peters* faith might not faile,) Or, if I do grant, what they cannot prove, that *Peters* ſucceſſours have this as their peculiar, yet why ſhould not this prayer preſerve the chaire of *Antioch* as well at that of Rome from fallibility? And how can this prayer *that his faith may not faile* be

put

put up by Chriſt for one of them that he tels us, he doth not pray for. *Joh.* 17.9. *I pray not for the World*, i.e. of reprobates (and ſuch many Popes are confeſſed to have been) or how can this prayer for perſeverance in the faith be offered up by Chriſt for ſuch as never had any true faith (as is acknowledged of many Popes) or how dare they ſay Chriſt prayed thus for the faith of all ſucceeding Popes, when they confeſſe the faith of ſeverall Popes hath failed? It is true they have a miſerable ſhift they tell us a *Pope may erre as a private perſon, though not as a Pope, he may erre perſonally, though not judicially*, not in Cathedrâ, it is no doubt among us (ſaith *Coſterus*) (a) *That the Pope as a private perſon, may erre and fall into Hereſy.* If this be granted, the Pope is not concerned in this prayer and promiſe of infallibility. For if this prayer for *Peter* reacheth to his Succeſſors, then the ſame priviledge for which Chriſt here prayes for *Peter*, for the ſame he prayeth for his Succeſſors: But the ſame priviledge, which according to their ſuppoſition is here prayed for on *Peters* behalfe, is not prayed for on the behalfe of his ſucceſſors, themſelves being Judges. For Chriſts prayer they confeſſe ſecured *Peter* from falling into errour, even as a private perſon, which you ſee they do not Pretend for the Pope. But here is the benefit of the popes reſerving the key of interpretations in his own breſt, for now he can order it as he pleaſeth, and proportion the meanings of any Text as need requires, and ſo this Text (if you pleaſe to believe them) it procures. 1. That *Peter* cannot erre, neither perſonally, nor judicially. 2. That the Pope may erre perſonally, but not

(a) *Dico nullum apud nos dubium eſſe, Romanum Pontificem, ut hominem privatum, errare ac in hæreſin labi poſſe*) in *Apologiâ, cap.* 2.

judicially

judicially. 3. That the whole Church of Rome cannot erre perſonally: But it is all the reaſon in the world that the firſt inventers and Authors of Infallibility ſhould have the diſpoſing of it in their own hands.

§. 12. A fourth place vehemently urged on the behalfe of the Popes Infallibility is, *Deut.* 17.11,12. where the *Jewes are commanded under paine of death to ſtand to the judgment of the High-Prieſt, and to do according to the ſentence which the Prieſt ſhould ſhew them.* --Therefore (ſay they) the High-Prieſt was infallible (elſe the people had been bound to reſt in a falſe deciſion) & conſequently the Pope who ſucceeds in the High-Prieſts place is infallible.

To which I anſwer, 1. If a man ſhould put them to prove the conſequence, how wofully would they be gravelled? If theſe Romaniſts would lay aſide their Dictatourſhip and condeſcend to the proofe of their aſſertions, how would they prove one of theſe things: 1. That the high Prieſt of the Jewes hath a viſible Succeſſour upon earth among Chriſtians. 2. That the Pope alone is this Succeſſor. 3. That this ſuppoſed ſucceſſor muſt be inveſted with all the Priviledges which the High-Prieſt had. But I ſhall paſſe by all theſe and the horrible impertinency of the inſtance & feebleneſſe of the conſequence, and ſhall aſſault them on the ſtrongeſt ſide by denying the Antecedent, *viz.* that any infallibility is here aſcribed or promiſed to the High-Prieſt, for proof hereof I offer theſe Arguments.

1. No more infallibility is here aſcribed to the High-Prieſt then to the Judg and to the inferiour Prieſts: But the Judge and inferiour Prieſts were not infallible; Ergo, This place doth not prove the High-Prieſts Infallibility, The Major is evident from the reading of the Words, the Judge or Civill Magiſtrate is joyned in the ſame commiſſion with the Prieſt, and the people are commanded to acquieſce indifferently in the determinations, both of the one and of the other: and therefore either

ther both are infallible, or neither: Again it is not the High-Prieſt alone, who is here meant, but others alſo, ſo the words run in the plurall number, *the Prieſts, the Levites, v. 9. And they ſhall ſhew thee*, they ſhal inform thee.

For the *Minor*, it is acknowledged by the Papiſts *Ergo*.

2 If this text proves the high Prieſt's infallibillity, it proves it in the matters here ſpoken of: But this place doth not prove the high prieſts infallibillity, in the matters here ſpoken of: for thoſe are matters of fact, *between blood and blood, plea and plea, ſtroke and ſtroke*: queſtions which were decided by Teſtimonies, and in ſuch they confeſſe the Pope may erre: ſo then their Argument runs thus: The high Prieſt was infallible, in matters of fact. Therefore the Pope is not infallible in matters of fact, but he is infallible in matters of Faith: but our comfort is, as it is a dangerous Argument, ſo themſelves furniſh us with an Antidote; for they deny both propoſitions. 1 they deny the conſequent, from matters of fact, to matters of faith. 2 They deny the antecedent, for they do not aſcribe to the Pope, and conſequently, not to the high Prieſt, infallibillity in matters of fact. You ſee what ſhifts they are put to, to ſupport their cauſe with ſuch rotten poſts: to argue from the Authority of the prieſts, to end particular controverſies between man and man, between blood and blood, plea and plea, ſtroke and ſtroke, (which is all that place ſpeaks of,) to the infallibility of the Pope, in all the matters of God, and deciding all the controverſies of religion. I think they have ſufficiently improved the ſtock the high Prieſt left them.

3 Thoſe words (however they may ſeem to a careleſſe reader at firſt view) do not aſſert the infallibility of the Prieſt or Prieſts, nor the obligation of the people to an abſolute ſubmiſſion, and blind obedience to all their dictates and expoſitions, & that for two undeniable reaſons.

1 Becauſe other places of Scripture (with whom this, muſt

muſt be reconciled) command both Prince, and people to keep cloſe to the word of God, and to that end, to read in the book of the law diligently, and to do according to all that is written therein, *Deut.* 5. 32, 33. *You ſhall obſerve to do as the Lord hath commanded you, you ſhall not turn aſide to the right hand, or to the left: You ſhall walke in all the wayes which the Lord commanded you.* So *Deut.* 6. 6 *&c.* It is Gods ſpeech to *Joſhua, ch.* 1. 8. *This booke of the law ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayeſt obſerve to do according to all that is written therein.* And in caſe of doubt, it is the Prophets injunction to the people, to have recourſe to the law, and to the Teſtimony. *Iſa.* 8, 20, Now put caſe an high prieſt ſhould fall into Idolatry (I may well ſuppoſe it, for it was done,) and ſhou'd expound the law ſo as to favour his opinion, & practice, I demand whether in this caſe, the people of the Jewes were bound to believe & obey him, or not, to worſhip an Idol, or not? Affirme it none will, but one of a Jeſuiticall h.e. a ſeared conſcience nor can any Chriſtian hear ſuch an aſſertion without horrour, If they deny it, their argument from this place is loſt.

2 That ſence of Scripture which juſtifies the Jewes in in putting Chriſt to death, is a falſe ſence, and corrupt expoſition: But the Popiſh ſence of this place, and their argument from it, doth juſtifie the Jewes in putting Chriſt to death. *Ergo* it is a corrupt expoſition, for the *Major*, he that denies it, deſerves not the name of a Chriſtian: *And* whatever his ſucceſſours will do at a pinch, I am ſure St. *Peter* did not juſtifie them, but ſeverely condemns them, and highly aggravates, their ſin in it: *Act.* 2, *&* 3, *&* 4, *&* 5. The *Minor*, (about which alone the doubt lies) I ſhall eaſily prove: which I am more willing to do, that all Chriſtians may obſerve the juſt Judgment of God, and the fearfull Apoſtacy of theſe men, that rather then recant their errours will, (in effect) renounce Chriſtianity

ſtianity, and juſtifie the murderers of Chriſt, I proveit thus: If the Jewes, in that Act, did nothing, but what by vertue of this place, they were obliged to do, then they did not ſin. But the Jewes did nothing in the murdering of Chriſt, but what by vertue of this place (If the Popiſh ſence bee true) they were obliged to do. *Ergo:* The *Major* they do, and muſt grant, for it cannot be a ſin to obey Gods command. The *Minor* I prove, if this law did require abſolute obedience to their Prieſts, and was in force at that time, then the Jewes did nothing, but what they were obliged to do: But this law did require ſuch obedience, (ſay the Papiſts) and it was in force at that time (ſay I) *Ergo:* The conſequence no man will deny, but he that doth not underſtand it. The *Minor*, I prove it in its two branches 1 This law bound the Jewes to abſolute obedience to their Prieſts: This is known to be their opinion. But becauſe I have no great confidence in the ingenuity of theſe men, I will prove it out of 2, or 3 of their moſt eminent authors. *Becanus* hath theſe words, *the whole people in matters of religion were commanded to follow that which the High-Prieſt enjoyned them.* (a) What more plain? Thus *Melchior Canus* (one of great Authority with them) *Moſes doth not command that they ſhould believe the Prieſts if they judged according to law, but rather, that they ſhould take that for law, which the Prieſt taught them* (b) *Bellarm* diſputes againſt the aſſertion of *Brentius*, *That the people were to ſtand to the Judgment of the High-Prieſt's only upon condition they judged according to law*, and argues that they were abſolutely bound to follow it. (c) And (that you may ſee it is

(a) *Totus populus in negotio religionis jubebatur id ſequi, quod Pontifex judicabat ſequi oportere. In manuali de Judice controverſiarum lib.1. cap 5. nu. 62.* (b) *Non præcipit* Moſes *ut ſacerdotibus credant, ſi judicarent ſecundum legem, ſed potius, ut quæ ſacerdotes docuerint, ea pro lege habeantur in Oper. Cani, lib.6.p.510.* (c) *De verbi Dei interp. lib.3 c.4.*

a reſolved caſe) *Gretſer* defends *Bel* in it and tell's us plainly the *people were bound to ſtand to the High-Prieſts judgment* whatſoever their ſentence was (*a*). I think an Adverſary will not require more for the proofe of the firſt branch of the Minor.

The ſecond branch of the Minor is, that this law was then in force, which I prove thus. If Chriſt had not at that time deſtroyed or aboliſhed this Law, it was in force: But Chriſt had not at that time deſtroyed or aboliſhed it: The Ceremoniall Law which was to expire yet in the judgment of all intelligent Divines, Antient and Modern, Popiſh and Proteſtant did not expire till the death of Chriſt, and conſequently while Chriſt lived, this Law was in force, which being conſidered, quite invalidates the laſt and moſt plauſible evaſion of the Papiſts to this inſtance as *Becanus* delivers it *Synagoga fere expiravit*, *The Synagogue was almoſt expired*: He ſhould have ſaid the *precept*, *Deut.* 17. *was altogether expired*, and inſtead of it here is, *the Synagogue was almoſt expired*: And what then? it was not yet expired, nor dead: A man that is almoſt dead is yet alive, and while the Law lives, it hath its force over us, as the Apoſtle argues *Rom* 7. 1. Elſe it is a pretty device of *Becanus*, and will do fine feats; for by the ſame Argument I will prove that the Jewes were not *then* bound to obſerve their Paſſeover, *quia Synagoga fere expiravit*: And if that Law which enjoyned the obſervation of the paſſeover was in full force to the Jewes, notwithſtanding the nearneſſe of its expiration, then the ſame muſt be acknowledged of this Law, which required abſolute obedience to the High-Prieſts ſentence, and conſequently the Jewes were then bound by it, and therefore (*Horreſco referens*) did not ſin in it; And becauſe the concluſion is diviliſh and deteſtable to all that love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity, therefore the principles from which it flowes are rotten, and

(a) *Quamcúmque ſententiam tulerunt. Defenſ. Bell. lib. 3. cap. 4. 1239.*

that Popiſh cauſe which cannot ſtand without ſuch prodigious blaſphemies ought to be abhorred by all that pretend to Chriſtianity. And therefore the Popiſh gloſſe upon the place is falſe, and their Argument from it is wicked, and the true ſence is this, they were bound to hearken to the Prieſts, if they delivered ſentence according to the Law, and not if they did groſly contradict it: And the rejection of this expoſition, and the aſſertion of the peoples implicit faith hath forced ſeverall of them, who paſſe for ſober men amongſt our Adverſaries into ſuch expreſſions as theſe *That this action of the Prieſts* (in condemning of Chriſt) *was indeed contrary to Chriſt, but their ſentence was moſt true, and moſt profitable, yea, that it was a Divine Oracle.* So *Canus* (a) *That at that time the Prieſts had the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth:* So *Petrus a Soto* (b) *That the Acts of that Councell were wicked, but the ſentence whereby they condemned Chriſt was juſt and true,* So *Harding.* (c) Really Proteſtants muſt be tender in preſſing their Arguments too farre, for the Papiſts, like wild Horſes when they are chafed will venture over hedg and ditch. We have already made them turne Jewes; I am afraid next remove we ſhall diſpute them into Paganiſme, if they be not there already.

§. 13. And thus I have diſpatched the Romaniſts pretenſions from Scripture, for the Popes Supreme and infallible Authority: If infallibility have any foundation in Scripture, it is in theſe places: And how far they are from giving any countenance or ſupport to their opinion I leave to that reader to judge, who hath either ſence or conſcience, or any care of his Salvation. En-

(a) *Nam ſacerdotum veterum acta quidem Chriſto adverſa fuerunt, at ſententia hominum alioqui peſſimorum non ſolum veriſſima, ſed reipub. etiam utiliſſima fuit. Quin Divinum oraculum fuiſſe* Johannes teſtatur *in operibus. lib. 5. cap. ult. pag. 283.* (b) *Non defuit tunc temporis ſacerdotio Levitico Spiritus Propheticus, Spiritus Sanctus, ſpiritus veritatis in Evangeliis.* (c) Againſt *Jewels* Apology *cap. 6. diviſ. 3. par. 6.*

I must not do them wrong, I confesse there is one Argument behind, and that is taken from St *Peters* prerogatives: And *Bellarmine* reckons up no lesse then twenty eight Prerogatives, which all undoubtedly belong to the Pope: yes, that I confesse strikes all dead and therefore I must crave the Readers pardon, and *Bellarmines* mercy, if I once do (as the Papists do ordinarily) passe over in silence what I cannot Answer, for who can resist these Evidences? *Peters* name is changed: *Ergo*, the Popes nature is changed from fallible to infallible: *Peter* is oft mentioned in the first place, therefore ought to have the first seat, and is the chiefe Bishop: *Peter* walks with Christ upon the Water, and therefore the Pope must raigne with him upon earth, and *Divisum imperium cum Jove Papa tenet*: *Peter* payes Tribute, and therefore the Pope should have a power of levying Tribute to reinburse him. Christ teacheth in *Peters* Ship, and therefore to quit scores, the Pope should rule in Christs Church: Christ bids *Peter* let down his Net, therefore the Pope must catch the Fish of Supremacy: Christ washeth *Peters* feet, therefore all men must kisse the Popes Toe: These and diverse other such prerogatives. *Bil* hath collected together, and vehemently argues from them for the Popes Supremacy, (*a*) but for these I must desire some time to give in my Answer.

I hope I have said enough to prove the second Proposition, *viz:* That the Scripture in it selfe is not a sufficient and solid foundation for a Papists faith (according to their Principles) and that the Popes pretended Infallibility hath no solid foundation there; But when they are beaten out of Scripture they use to fly to the Fathers, and to rest their Faith in the Authority of the Fathers: And therefore that must be considered in the next place.

(a) *De Pontifice, lib.* 1. *ca.* 17. *ad ca.* 25.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the Authority and Infallibility of the Fathers.

Prop. 3. *Sect.* 1. THe third Propoſition then is this: *The Faith of the Papiſts hath no ſolid foundation in the Authority of the Fathers*: This the rather deſerves conſideration, becauſe they make their great boaſt of it, and urge it as a principall Pillar of their Faith. It is aſſerted in their Cannon Law, *That the Fathers are to be owned and followed even to the leaſt jot.* And although ſome of them have declared their diſlike of that aſſertion; yet they generally agree in this, *That the Authority of the Fathers, eſpecially where they conſent, is a ſolid Foundation for their faith to reſt upon.* Hence thoſe expreſſions of their great Doctors, *Take away the Authority of Fathers, and Councels, and all things in the Church are doubtfull and uncertaine*, Eccius. (a) *From the Writings of the Fathers as from an Oracle Univerſities have the certainty of their aſſertions, and Councels have their decrees*, (b) *Sixtus Senenſis*, *Melilior Canus* an Author of great Note among the Romaniſts laies down this Concluſion, *That the common ſence of the Fathers in the expoſition of Scripture is a moſt certaine Argument to confirme Theologicall aſſertions: For* (ſaith he) *the ſence of all thoſe Holy men is the ſence of Gods Spirit.* And a little after, *Although you may require of a Philoſopher the reaſon of a Philoſophicall Concluſion, yet*

(a) *Tollatur Patrum & Conciliorum authoritas & omnia in Eccleſiâ erunt ambigua, dubia, pendentia, incerta. In Euchiridio de Conciliis.*
(b) *Et Scriptis Sanctorum Patrum velut ex oraculis Theologorum Academiæ aſſertionum ſuarum conſtantiam accipiunt, ſummique Pontifices decreta ſumunt in præfat.* lib 5. Biblioth.

in the expoſition of Holy Scripture, you are bound to believe your Anceſtors, though they give you no reaſon for it, and to defend whatſoever opinions you receive from them, of the Law of faith and of Religion: And a little after, *All thoſe Holy men together cannot erre in a matter of Faith.* (a) *All the Fathers together do never erre, nor can they agree in one error* ſaith *Bell.* (b) *The ſayings and Teſtimonies of the Antient Fathers are not to be examined, when all or almoſt all do agree in one opinion*, ſaith *Salmeron.* (c) *That which the Fathers unanimouſly deliver about Religion is Infallibly true*, ſaith *Gregory de Valentiâ*; (d) from all which we plainly ſee, that according to their opinion, the judgment of the Fathers is a ſure baſis and ground of Faith: That is it which I am now to diſprove, and to ſhew, That the Writings of the Fathers, neither are, nor can be a ſafe and ſufficient foundation for a Papiſts Faith.

§. 2. Onely let me premiſe two things. 1. I would not be miſunderſtood as if I did intend to derogate from the juſt Authority of the Fathers, or to defraud them of that veneration which is due to perſons of ſuch Antiqui-

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(a) *In expoſitione ſacrarum literarum communis omnium ſanctorum veterum intelligentia certiſſimum argumentum Theologo præſtat ad Theologicas aſſertiones corroborandas. Quippe cum ſanctorum omnium ſenſus Spiritus Sancti ſenſus ipſe ſit.* —— *Quanquam à Philoſophis quidem rationem Philoſophicæ concluſionis jure forſitan poſtularis, ita Sacrarum autem literarum intelligentiâ, majoribus noſtris debes, nullâ etiam ratione habitâ, credere, & quas ſententias de lege, de fide, deque religione ab illis accepiſti defendere.* Loc. Theolog. lib. 7. c. 3. Concluſ. 5. *Sancti ſimul omnes in fidei Dogmate errare non poſſunt.* Ibid. Conc. 6. (b) *Patres nunquam omnes ſimul errant, etiamſi aliquis eorum interdum erret, nam ſimul omnes in uno errore convenire non poſſunt.* Bel. lib. 2. de Chriſto cap. 2. et l. 1. de Purgat. c. 10. (c) *Non ſunt probanda (examinanda) veterum Patrum dicta & teſtimonia quando omnes vel fere omnes in unam ſententiam conveniunt*, lib. 1. Epiſ. Pauli part. 3. diſp. 6. in fine. (d) *Quod Patres unanimi conſenſu circa religionem tradunt, infallibiliter verum eſt; in Analiſi fidei* lib. 8. c. 8.

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ty, ability, and integrity, but onely to denie that pretended infallibility which none did more diſlike then themſelves as we ſhall ſee hereafter. Let them have all the honour which is due to the moſt worthy men, not acted by divine inſpiration, but let them not have that Honour which belongs to God onely, and his inſpired ones: We grant their Teſtimony is highly credible, eſpecially where there is indeed that which is oft pretended, but ſeldome proved, *viz.* an univerſall conſent, but their Authority is not infallible. 2. That I do not fall into this diſpute as declining the judgment of the Fathers of the firſt 600 years, or ſuſpecting their partiality on the Popes ſide. I know ſufficiently, and ſo may any man (whom the God of this World hath not blinded) that doth but read what our Learned Divines have ſaid in this particular, or with his own eyes look into the Fathers, that there is is not one conſiderable point in controverſie between us and the Romaniſts, but if judgment were to be given by any impartiall perſon from the Fathers (excepting thoſe who are evidently demonſtrated to be ſpurious Authors) their mouths would preſently be ſtopped and their cauſe and confidence lay'd in the duſt; onely becauſe that work is ſo thoroughly done by others, and would ſwell this into a voluminous bigneſſe; I ſhall forbeare that, and proceed to handle what I propoſed; and I ſhall prove the propoſition by foure Arguments.

1. All thoſe aſſertions and Arguments which the Papiſts urge againſt the Authority of ſacred Scripture, for the deciſion of controverſies do no leſſe overthrow all the Authority of the Writings of the Fathers. When they attempt to diſprove the Authority of the Scriptures conſidered in themſelves; theſe are then Arguments univerſally owned and urged: *God would not have his Church depend upon Paper-Books* ſaith *Coſterus*. *Scripture* (ſay they) *cannot decide controverſies, becauſe it cannot*

ſummon and heare both parties, it cannot compell trangreſſours to obedience, it doth not particularly condemne Hereticks: It doth not ſay Erras Jacobe Gretſere, *Gretſer you are in an errour: It ſpeaks doubtfully, and men diſpute about the ſence of Scripture, and ſo controverſies will be endleſſe.* Hence I thus argue; Either thoſe Arguments are ſtrong and cogent againſt the Scriptures Authority, or they are not: If they be not, then the Scripture muſt be owned as Judge of Controverſies, notwithſtanding all thoſe Arguments: If they be valid againſt the Authority of Scriptures, why are they not as ſtrong againſt the Authority of the Fathers? Or what difference is there in this particular, between the writings of the Scripture and of the Fathers? Are the writings of St *Paul* deaf that they cannnot hear parties, and dumbe, that they cannot deliver ſentence, and can the Writings of St *Auſtine*, heare, and ſpeake? Doth not the Scripture ſay *Gretſer* you are in an errour? And do the writings of *Jerome* or *Ambroſe* ſay, *Luther* you are in an error? Cannot St *Paul* condemne Hereticks and compell tranſgreſſors to obedience? and can St *Cyprian* do it? What offence hath St *Paul* done, that *Peters* Succeſſors ſhould thus degrade him, ſure *Manet altâ mente repoſtum* they bare him a grudge for reproving St *Peter Gal.* 2. And ſo now they are even with him. In ſhort, foraſmuch as the Arguments and premiſes are wholly the ſame concerning the Scriptures and the Fathers, either the authority of both of them muſt be receaved as Judges of Controverſies, or elſe both muſt be rejected: For, *in pari cauſâ idem jus*, ſay the Lawyers, *in the ſame cauſe, there is the ſame right.*

Againe another of their Arguments, Why the Scripture cannot of it ſelfe be a ground of Faith is this; becauſe *without the Church, we cannot know which books of Scripture are genuine, and which are ſpurious*: This is the great Argument of *Stapleton*, and all other Romiſh Doctors.

In

In like manner I argue the writings of the Fathers cannot in themſelves be a ſolid ground of my faith, becauſe without the Churches judgment I cannot tell which of their Writings are genuine, and which are ſpurious. For that there are great multitude of ſpurious Writings masked under the names of the Fathers, is acknowledged by *Sixtus Senenſis. Bel.* and others, and the Fathers themſelves oft complained of that practiſe in their daies. So again, *Scripture is obſcure and ambiguous, and full of ſeeming contradictions, and there are many diſputes about the true ſence, and therefore it cannot be the rule of my faith* ſay *Bellarm. Becanus, Coſterus*, and the reſt. The ſame may be more juſtly ſaid againſt the Authority of the Fathers. Their obſcurity and ambiguity appeares from the very ſame Arguments which they bring to make good their charge againſt the Scriptures, even from the multitude of Comments which Learned men have made upon the darke paſſages of the Fathers, in which, no leſſe then in St *Pauls* Epiſtles are δυσνοητα, things hard to be underſtood, which men of corrupt minds wreſt to their own deſtruction, and from the great diſputes which are at this day fervent in the World, concerning the judgments of the Fathers, and their meaning in ſeverall paſſages about which there are as fierce conteſts as about any paſſages of the Scripture: it having been truly obſerved by indifferent perſons, that both Papiſts and Proteſtants have fortified their ſeverall and contrariant aſſertions with plauſible allegations from the Fathers: Nor are there onely ſeeming contradictions in the Fathers (as there are in Scripture) but moſt reall and direct ones, and if it be not enough, that one of them contradicts another, many pregnant inſtances are given of the ſame Father in one place, contradicting himſelfe in another; But for this and other things concerning the Fathers Authority, I muſt refer the Reader to thoſe Learned Au-

thors that have exemplified this in ſeverall Inſtances (*a*). Once more, *The Scripture* (they ſay) *is corrupted and falſified in ſeverall places, and ſo unfit to be a rule:* And have the Fathers Works ſeen no corruption? Yes, we have it under the hands of *Poſſevinus, Sixtus Senenſis, Bellarm.* and others who confeſs their hard hap in this particular, and how wofully they are corrupted in multitudes of places, and needs muſt the Fathers fare worſe then the Scriptures herein, becauſe they were never preſerved with that care and conſcience which was exerciſed about the Holy Scriptures; Therefore, either they muſt quit their Arguments againſt the Scriptures Authority, or elſe renounce the Authority of the Fathers which is obnoxious to the ſame inconveniencies.

§. 42. That the Fathers whoſe writings are extant (for of them this propoſition treats) are not infallible, may be undeniably evinced from the Hypotheſis of our Adverſaries, and the ſuppoſed ſubject of that Infallibility which is pretended. Infallibility is the proper and peculiar priviledge of the Church, ſay all the Papiſts: The onely queſtion is, *What this Church is?* Some make it the Pope, others a Councell, others the whole body of the faithfull, but they generally agree that it muſt be ſome one or all of thoſe: But the Fathers I am here diſcourſing of are not one, or all of theſe, and therefore they cannot pretend to the ſuppoſed infallibility; nor can the Papiſts by their own principles aſcribe it to them; to which may be added, That if the Pope himſelfe, notwithſtanding his pretended gift of Infallibility, may erre as a private Doctor, either in ſpeaking, or writing (which all the Papiſts grant) how can either any, or moſt of them, who have no other capacity but that of a private Doctor be exempt from a poſſibility of erring? And conſequently the Fathers are not infallible, nor a ſolid foundation for a Papiſts faith.

(*a*) *Whitaker, Gerhard, Daille.*

§. 5.

Sect. 5. Again, if they will needs obtrude upon us, this upſtart Infallibility of particular fathers, I demand whether this infallibility belongs to all the fathers that lived in one Age, or only to the Writers of that Age, or only to thoſe of the Writers, whoſe works have had better hap then others to come to our hand, and whether to all them together, or onely to a part of them? For one of theſe they muſt unavoydably aſſert: If they ſay the firſt, that this Infallibility was in all the fathers that lived in one Age, or the *Major* part of them (as in reaſon they muſt, for what Scripture or Reaſon had one, to pretend Infallibility, more then another, excepting alwayes the Biſhop of *Room*, of whoſe Infallibility, it muſt, bee confeſſed, there was never any quæſtion. *namely*, in thoſe dayes none had the impudence to aſſert it) if that be granted yet thoſe few whoſe writings are extant (of whom alone our controverſie is) might all be fallible, though the *Major* part of the Fathers be acknowledged infallible. If it be ſaid, thoſe Fathers do not onely ſpeak their own ſence, but the ſence of the Church of their Age, and in that reſpect, they are infallible, which is the common plea, and moſt plauſible Argument they uſe in this point: *The Fathers are infallible, not in their expoſitions, but in their traditions, and the Doctrines they deliver as received from their Anceſtors*: Thus Sr *Kenelm Digby*, *White*, *Holden*, and the Papiſts of the new Modell, This I ſhall have occaſion to handle more largely afterward: At preſent it may ſuffice to anſwer two things. 1 That it is moſt certain, they are ſo far from delivering the ſence of the Churh of that Age in the controverſies between us, and the Romaniſts, that they ſeldom touch, upon the moſt of them, and when they do it, it is *obiter*, and by accident, not *ex profeſſo*, and ſolemnly, they being then taken up with other matters, as diſputing againſt Jewes, and Gentiles, and the hereticks of that Age

ſt 2 However, that being purely matter of fact to under-
and, and report the Hiſtory of the Churches Doctrine in their Age; if they were infallible in matters of Faith, yet in point of fact, they were not infallible. For the Pope himſelf is allowed to bee fallible in ſuch matters, and as it is confeſſed, the Pope may erre, through fear or hope, or humane paſſions (as *Liberius Marcellinus*, and others did) at beſt, for a ſeaſon: ſo doubtleſſe might the Fathers, either through weakneſſe, miſunderſtand, or through favour, or prejudice miſreport the ſence of others, (of which it were eaſy to give many Inſtances.) If the ſecond thing be aſſerted, that this Infallibility belongs only to the Writers of each Age, wee would deſire them to ſet their inventions on work, to deviſe a reaſon why the Writers were infallible, and not the Preachers, ſeeing the Apoſtles who had, and all others that pretend to Infallibility (as the Pope, and Councell) challenge it equally in their Sermons, and Writings, in their verbal, and written decrees, and much leſſe can they with any colour aſſert that this Infallibility belongs only to thoſe Writers which are come to our hands, as if it were not ſufficient for the reſt, that they loſt their Writings, but they muſt alſo loſe their Infallibility. And yet ſuch is the impudence of theſe men, and the deſperateneſſe of their cauſe, that they are found to attribute this Infallibility, not onely to all conjunctly, but to the moſt of that ſmal remnant of ſurviving Writers, as you ſaw from their expreſſions, which becauſe they are ſo monſtrouſly bold as to aſſert, I ſhall take the boldneſſe to aſke, by what right ſhall five Fathers, vid. *Dionyſius*, *Clemens*, *Ignatius*, *Polycarpus*, and *Hermes*, ſuppoſing that all the works extant under their names were genuine (for theſe are all left us of thoſe great numbers of the Fathers of the firſt Age) I ſay, by what right ſhall theſe five inveſt themſelves with the name, or priviledge of the whole Catholick Church of that Age: (for

it is to her alone the ſuppoſed promiſe of Infallibility was made) in what Scripture, or Father, or Lexicon, do five Fathers make up the whole Church? True it is, the Pope hath a peculiar priviledge in this point, and is by the Jeſuites inveſted with the name of the Church ---*The Church Virtuall.* And it muſt be acknowledged there is ſince colour for the Title: for having ſwallowed up all the rights and priviledges of the Church, he ought to have the Name into the bargain: But ſetting aſide that prodigious ἀναχρονισμός; I would know, why I might not as well ſay, that five of the Romiſh Doctors, *viz. Salmeron, Canus, Coſterus, Stapleton,* and *Bellarmine,* are the Church of Rome, or that five of our Engliſh Doctors are the Church of *England,* nay, all the Proteſtant World, as that five of the Fathers made up the whole Church of their Age? Yet againe, foraſmuch as they aſcribe infallibility, not onely to all, but alſo to the major part of the Fathers: of theſe five then, two may erre by their own confeſſion. And that all the particular Fathers have their their errors is generally acknowledged by the Papiſts, and often urged by them to defend themſelves from the force of many convincing allegations from the Fathers againſt their opinions. Well then, to keep to this particular inſtance: It is granted that *Dionyſius* may erre, and ſo may *Ignatius,* then the Infallibility is preſerved in *Clemens,* and *Polycarpus,* and *Hermes*: But they alſo, or any two of them may erre in other things, and then the Infallibility is preſerved in *Dionyſius,* and *Ignatius,* and *Hermes.* Thus (it ſeems) Infallibility is banded between the Fathers like a Tennis-ball, from one to another, and they have it by turnes. Such monſters muſt be in the Concluſion, if Infallibility be in the premiſes. That is enough for the ſecond Argument.

§. 5. The third Argument is this: The Fathers profeſſe they are not infallible: either they ſay true or falſe;

if

if true, then they are not infallible; if falſe, then they erred in that aſſertion, and therefore are not Infallible. So the Papiſts are gone by their own Argument, and rule too: For here we have the conſent of the Fathers; It were infinite to recount all paſſages to this purpoſe: I ſhall onely ſuggeſt ſome few which are evident and undeniable in this particular. *Clemens Alexandrinus* hath theſe words, *The principle of our Doctrine is the Lord who hath taught us by the Prophets, by the Goſpell, and by the Apoſtles*; and he addes, *If any man think this Principle needs another Principle, he doth not indeed keep that Principle.* But the Papiſts ſay, the Scripture principle needs another principle to ſupport it, *viz.* the Churches Authority: *Ergo*, the Papiſts have forſaken the principle of the Scripture, and ſo ſaved us further labour of proving their Apoſtacy. And he addes, *that the ſtandard by which things are to be examined, is not the teſtimony of men* (therefore not the Teſtimony of Fathers, Councels, Popes, who I thinke are all men, ſave onely that ſeverall of the Popes are repreſented by their own Authors as beaſts) *but the Word of the Lord.* And leſt you ſhould underſtand it of Tradition, he calls it juſt before the Scripture and word of the Lord: *We do not* (ſaith he) *believe the aſſertions of men, they muſt not onely ſay, but prove, and that too from the*

Lib. Stromatum 7. verſus finem. Ἔχομεν γὰρ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς διδασκαλίας τὸν Κύριον διὰ τε τῶν προφητῶν —— καὶ Ἀποστόλων —— τὴν ἀρχὴν δ' εἴπις ἑτέρα δεῖται ὑπολάβοι ἐκεῖ' ἂν ὄντως ἀρχὴ φυλακθεῖη —— ὑ τῷ ἁπλῶς ἀποφαινομένοις ἀνθρώποις πεσθέχωμεν ὅις καὶ ἀναποδείκτως ἐπ' ἴσης ἔξεσιν εἰδέναι ἃ μόνον ἁπλῶς ἐιπεῖν τὴν δόξαν, ἀλλὰ πιστωθῆναι δεῖ τὸ λεκθὲν, ὑ τὰ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀναμένομεν μαρτυρίαν, ἀλλὰ τῇ τῦ Κυρίε φωνῇ πιστέωθαι τὸ ζητέμενον.

Scriptures.

Scriptures. What can be more expreſſe? So *Baſil* (a) tels us, *The hearers that are inſtructed in the Scriptures muſt examine the Doctrine of their teachers, they muſt receive thoſe things which are agreeable to Scripture, and reject thoſe things which are contrary to it:* Where we plainly ſee St *Baſils* direct contrariety to the principles and practiſe of the Romiſh Church.

1. St *Baſil* allowes his heares to examine their teachers Doctrine; ſo do not the Papiſts. *The people are ſo bound to be ſubject to their Paſtours, that if their Paſtours ſhoulderre, the people were bound to erre with them*, ſaith *Tannerus*, (b) *A Chriſtian is bound to receive the Churches Doctrine without examination*, ſaith *Bellarmine*. Paſtours are ſimply to be heard in all things, nor are we to conſider what is ſaid, but who ſaid it, *i. e.* if he were a lawfull Paſtour, as *Stapleton* (d) bellowes it out (for it is a ſpeech fitter for a beaſt then for a man,) (c) And yet theſe are the men who will not depart a nailes bredth from the Fathers: This is the Church, the principall note whereof is conſent with the Fathers, of which you may judge by this, and what we ſhall adde from others.

(a) *In Moralium regulâ 72. in initio.* Ὅτι δεῖ τῶν ἀκροατῶν τοὺς πεπαιδευμένους τὰς χαρὰς δοκιμάζειν τὰ ὑπὸ τῶν διδασκάλων λεγόμενα, καὶ τὰ μὲν σύμφωνα ταῖς γραφαῖς δέχεσθαι, τὰ δ' ἀλλότρια ἀποβάλλειν.

(b) *In Collatione Ratiſboncnſi.* §. 9.

(c) *Debet Chriſtianus ſine examine recipere Doctrinam eccleſiæ* Bellar. *de verbi Dei Interpretatione*, lib. 3. c. 10.

(d) *In cauſa fidei non eſt conſiderandum quid dicatur ſed quis dicat:* Relect. con. 1. qu. 4. art. 2. p. 91. *Eccleſiam audire populum fidelem Chriſtus jubet, Doctrinam Eccleſiæ populam expendere non jubet* Stapleton *Triplicat. adverſus* Whitak. pro Eccleſ. Author pag. 89. cap. 9. *Et alibi voci Eccleſi in Doctrinâ fidei ſimpliciter & abſolute acquieſcendum eſt*, in Robert. con. 4. qu. 3. art. 3.

2. *Baſil*

2. *Baſil* makes the Scripture alone the rule by which all other things are to be examined, not Fathers, not Councels, not Traditions: but the Papiſts are of another minde. St *Clara* (a) tels us of a *Popiſh Treatiſe, written by a friend of his, ſolemnly approved by the Pariſhian Doctors of the Sorbon* (ſo you ſee it is no particular fancy, but a received opinion) *where* (ſaith he) *that Author expreſly aſſerts, that the Church therefore receives the Scriptures, becauſe, and ſo far as they are conformable to Tradition not contrarily*, i.e. She doth not receive Tradition, becauſe, and ſo far as it agrees with Scripture: *And thus far doubtleſſe he was in the right*, ſaith St *Clare*; And conſequently *Baſil* was in the wrong.

That ſaying of *Cyprians* is never to be forgotten; (b) *That Chriſt alone is to be heard, the Father witneſſeth from Heaven: We are not therefore to regard what others before us thought, but what he that was before all, Chriſt firſt did, for we are not to follow the cuſtome of men but the truth of God.* If the Papiſts would ſay as much, this controverſy would be at an end. And it is obſervable, that *Pamelius* who is very brisk and free of his Notes and animadverſions whereever *Cyprian* caſts in a word that may ſeem to give countenance to their opinions, paſſeth over this place with profound ſilence, as well ſeeing, it was ſo hot, it would have burned his Fingers.

(a) *Prodiit quidam Dialogus —— ſolenniter Pariſiis approbatus —— In quo expreſſe aſſerit Eccleſiam ideo recipere Scripturas, quia & in quantum ſunt conformes fidei, quam ab Apoſtolis per traditiones accepit; non è converſo. Et hactenus ſine dubio rectiſſimè.* Syſtemat. fidei cap. 11. in initio.

(b) *Quod ſolus Chriſtus debet audiri Pater de cœlo teſtatur —— Non ergo debemus attendere quid alius ante nos faciendum putaverit, ſed quid qui ante omnes eſt Chriſtus prior fecerit, neque enim hominis conſuetudinem, ſequi oportet, ſed Dei veritatem. Epiſtola. 63. ad Cæcilium.*

St *Chryſoſtome*

St *Chrysostome* (a) is as fully Protestant in this particular (as if he had been of Councell in our cause) in two points he is positive for us. 1. He presseth the people to examine things delivered to them (therefore he was against the Popish implicit faith) *Let us not carry about the opinion of the multitude, but let us examine things*; and not contented to deliver the assertion, he addes a reason. *Is it not absurd, that when you are to receive mony, you do not trust other men, but examine it your selves, and when you are to judge of things, then to be drawn away by other mens opinions? And this* (saith he) *is the worse fault in you, because you have the Scriptures.* That brings in the second Heresy of *Chrysostomes*: The rule by which he commands them to try all things is the Scripture, and (the mischiefe too is) he cals it a perfect rule, *you have* (saith he) *an exact standard and rule of all things*: and he concludes thus, *I beseech you do not regard what this or that man thinks, but enquire all things of the Scriptures*: I know no way to avoid this evident testimony but one: if I might advise them, the next Jesuite that Writes shall swear these words were foisted into *Chrysostomes* works, by the Protestants; and that they are not to be found in an old Manuscript Copy of *Chrysostome* in the Vatican.

What Protestant can deliver our Doctrine more fully then *Origen*: *It is necessary* (saith he) *that we should alledge the Testimony of Scriptures, without which our expositions do not command faith* (b): Or then *Cyrill*, *Do*

(a) 13. *Homilia in 2. ex. ad Corinth. versus finem* μὴ τὰς τῶν πάλλων δόξας περιφέρωμεν, ἀλλὰ τὰ πράγματα ἐξετάσωμεν ——— γραφὴν ἔκοτε ἀκριβῆ σύγον ἁπάντων καὶ γνώμονα καὶ κάνονα ——— ἀφέντες τί τῷ δεῖνι καὶ τῷ δῖνι δοκεῖ περὶ τούτων παρὰ τῶν γραφῶν ταῦτα πάντα πυνθάνεσθε.

(b) *Necesse est nobis Scripturas sanctas in testimonium vocare, sensus quippe nostri et enarrationes nostræ sine his testibus non habent fidem.* Homil. 1. re Jerem.

not

not believe me ſaying theſe things, unleſſe I prove them out of the Scriptures (c). Or then *Ambroſe*, thus ſpeaking to the Emperour *Gratian*, *I would not you ſhould believe our Argument or diſputation, let us aske the* Scriptures, *aske the* Prophets, *the Apoſtles*, (d). S^t *Auſtin* had none of the Fathers in greater veneration, then *Cyprian*, and *Ambroſe*; yet heare how he ſpeaks of them, of *Cyprian* thus: (e) *I am not obliged by his Authority; I do not look on his Epiſtles as Canonicall, but I examine them by the Scriptures, and what is repugnant thereunto, with his good leave I reject it:* Would the Papiſts give us but this liberty, we ſhould deſire no more: and of *Ambroſe* he ſaith the like.

Peradventure it will be ſaid in this point, as it is in the generall; That although it is confeſſed by the Fathers, that particular Doctors are liable to error; yet in ſuch things wherein the Fathers do unanimouſly agree, they have an infallible Authority, and are a ſufficient foundation of Faith.

To this I anſwer: 1 If this were granted, it doth not in the leaſt, ſecure the Romiſts concernments, becauſe there is not one of all thoſe points controverted between them and us, wherein ſuch unanimous conſent can be produced, but in every one of them there are pregnant allegations, out of ſome of the Fathers repugnant to their opinions and aſſertions. This their learned men cannot but know, and if they have any ingenuity in them, they cannot deny.

(c) Μηδὲ ἐμοὶ τῷ ταυτα λέγοντι ἁπλῶς πίστευσης. Catecheſi. 4.

(d) *Nolo Argumento noſtro credas, Sancte Imperator, aut noſtræ diſputationi Scripturas interrogemus Apoſtolos, interrogemus Prophetas interrogemus Chriſtum*, lib. 1. de fide ad Gratianum.

(e) *Ejus Authoritate non teneor, ejus literas non ut Canonicas habeo, eas ex Canonicis conſidero; quod Scripturæ non congruit cum pace ejus reſpuo.* in lib. 2. contra Creſſonium cap. 32.

2 I anſwer with *Witaker* againſt urging this very Plea: *What a ſilly thing is it to deny, that, that which happen'd to each of them cannot poſſibly happen to all of them.* (a) And with *Gerhard*, *the Teſtimonies of the Fathers collectively taken, cannot bee of another kind and nature, then they are diſtributively* (b). Nor can any man deny the truth of the propoſition, if he apprehends the meaning of it; for how can the ſame perſons, being onely conſidered under a double notion be both fallible and infallible at the ſame time; And if *Auſtin*, *Ambroſe*, *Cyprian* (ſuppoſing theſe were all the Fathers) be each of them fallible, how can a meer collective conſideration of them render them infallible?

3. I Anſwer with Learned Dr *Holdſworth*: That the Fathers deny this Infallibility, not onely to one or two of them diſperſedly, but to all the Antients collectively conſidered, (c) and this I ſhall prove onely by one Argument. They that make Infallibility the peculiar property of the Canonicall Writer, deny the Infallibility of the Fathers, eitheir collectively, or diſtributively conſidered: But the Fathers make Infallibility the peculiar property of the Canonicall Writers, and abjudicate it from all other Writers. St *Jerome* is expreſſe, *Except the Apoſtles, whatſoever elſe is afterward ſaid, let it be cut off,*

(a) *Quam hoc ineptum eſt quod ſingulis contigit, id negare poſſe in omnes cadere Contra* lib. 6. *De Firmamentis patrum.* Pag. 414.

(b) *Patrum ſingulorum teſtimonia collective ſumpta non poſſunt eſſe alterius generis quam ſingula ſunt diſtributivè.* Confeſſ. Cathol. lib. 1. par. 2. cap. 13.

(c) *Non ſolum de uno aut altero ſparſim, ſed de omnibus veteribus gregatim in ſcriptis ſuis Patres ubique pronuntiant & eorum dogmata eſſe ad Scripturas expendenda ut probentur, & eorum teſtimonia ex Scripturis æſtimanda ut ex iſtarum conſenſulant diſſenſu magis minuſve valeant ad fidei controverſias dirimendas.* Lect. 46.

for

for it hath no Authority (a). And againe, *I make a difference between the Apoſtles and other Writers, thoſe alwaies ſaid Truth; but theſe in ſomethings as men did erre* (b).

St *Auſtin* makes this difference between the Holy Scriptures and all other Writings, That *thoſe are to be read with a neceſſity of believing, but theſe with a liberty of judging* (c). What living man can expreſſe the Proteſtant Doctrine in more evident termes then the ſame Father elſewhere doth, *That which is confirmed by the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, is without doubt to be believed, but for other witneſſes and teſtimonies,* (whether more, or fewer; agreed, or divided, all is one to St *Auſtin*) *you may receive them or reject them as you ſhall judge, they have more or leſſe weight* (d). And again, when he was preſſed by *Jerom* with the Authority of ſix or ſeven of the Greek Fathers, he thus Anſwers: (c) *I have learned to give this honour and reverence to the Books of Scripture, to believe there is no error in them: But as for others, how Learned or Godly ſoever they be, I ſo read them that I do not believe any thing to be true, becauſe they thought ſo,*

(a) *Exceptis Apoſtolis, quodcunque aliud poſtea dicitur, abſcindatur non habet poſtea authoritatem.* in Pſal. 86. (c) *Scito me aliter habere Apoſtolos, aliter reliquos tractatores, illos ſemper vera dicere iſtos in quibuſdam, ut homines errare.* Epiſt. 62. ad Theoph. Alex.

(b) *Id genus literarum à nobis non cum credendi neceſſitate ſed cum judicandi libertate legendum eſt.* contra. Fauſtum l. 11. c. 5.

(c) *Quod Divinarum ſcripturarum perſpicuâ firmatur Authoritate, ſine ullâ dubitatione credendum eſt: aliis vero teſtibus vel teſtimoniis tibi credere vel non credere liceat, quantum ea momenti ad faciendam fidem vel habere vel non habere perpenderis.* Epiſ. 112. ad Paulinum.

(d) *Solis Scripturarum libris —— didici hunc timorem honoremque deferre ut nullum eorum ſcribendo erraſſe firmiſſimè credam —— Alios autem ita lego ut quantalibet ſanctitate, doctrinâque præpolleant, non ideo verum putem quia ipſi ita ſenſerunt, ſed quia per Canonicas perſuadere potuerunt:* Tom. 2. Epiſ. 19.

but

but becauſe they proved it ſo to be by the Scriptures. To conclude, ſo evident is St. *Auſtin's* judgment in that point, that it forced this ingenuous confeſſion from a learned and acute Papiſt, *Occam* by name, who ſpeaking of a paſſage of St. *Auſtins* about this point, hath theſe words. *It is to be noted, that Auſtin in that authority ſpeaking of other writers beſide the pen-men of the Scripture, maks no difference among theſe Non-Canonical Writers: and therefore, whether they be Popes, or others, whether they writ in Council, or out of Council, the ſame judgment is to be paſſed upon them.* You ſee St. *Auſtin's* mind is plain, and doth (our Adverſaries themſelves being judges) directly overturne that great fundamental point of the Infallibility of Councels and Popes (which, if you will believe them, is not only true, but neceſſary to ſalvation) and yet theſe are the men that walk in the good old paths; Theſe are they, that maintaine no doctrine, but what hath been conveyed to them by the Fathers. I know no Salvo but that which they uſe in the great article of Tranſubſtantiation, viz. to tell us, we muſt not believe our ſelves when we read ſuch paſſages in the Fathers, and that together with the eyes of our mind our Reaſons, and Conſciences, we muſt give up the eyes of our body to the Pope's diſpoſal. And this doctrine of *Auſtins* (if you will believe the Romaniſts) when delivered by the Proteſtants is a new and upſtart doctrine, never heard of in the world till *Luther's* dayes; and by this you may judge of the juſtice of that charge, when the like is ſaid of our other doctrines. I might fill up a Treatiſe with pertinent citations out of the Fathers to this

(a) *Notandum quòd Auguſtinus in authoritate illa loquens de ſcriptoribus aliis à ſcriptoribus Bibliæ, inter hos ſcriptores & illos non diſtinguit: & ideo, ſive fuerint ſummi Pontifices, ſive alii, ſive ſcripſerint aliquid in Concilio, ſive extra, conſimile de eis judicium eſt habendum.* Part. 3. Dialog. tract. 1. lib. 3. cap. 24.

purpoſe, but this is enough for any but thoſe, who are reſolved to ſacrifice their conſciences to the Pope's ambition, and for them it is too much.

§ 7. The fourth and laſt argument is this: The Papiſts themſelves, whatever ſometimes they pretend, yet indeed do not make the Fathers the ground & foundation of their Faith, but acknowledg them fallible 1. This appears from what hath already been diſcourſed concerning their avowed Doctrine, That Infallibility is the proper and peculiar priviledge of the Church, and conſequently belongs not to the Fathers in their ſingle capacities. 2. It appears from the acknowledged novelty of ſeveral Romiſh doctrines, which their moſt learned men confeſs cannot be proved from the Fathers: Such are

1. The doctrine of forbidding the reading of the Scripture to Lay-men (as they are called:) *We confeſs in their dayes* (viz. of Jerome and Auguſtine) *Lay-men were converſant in the reading of the Scripture*, ſaith *Azorius* (a). And whereas many Popiſh Authors expound thoſe words *Joh.* 5 39. ἐρευνᾶτε τὰς γραφὰς indicatively, as if they did only acquaint us with the practice of the Jewes, and not containe a command of Chriſt to his hearers to read the Scriptures. *Tolet* and *Maldonate* (b) both witneſſe, that *Chryſoſtome, Theophylact, and Auguſtine, and all weighty authors except Cyrill do underſtand it imperatively for a command of Chriſt.*

2 They acknowledg the novelty of Tranſubſtantiation. The words of *Scotus* are theſe: (c) *Before the Lateran Councell, the doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation was no point of*

(a) *Fatemur tunc temporis (ſub ætate Hieronymi & Chryſoſtomi) laicos in Scripturarum lectione verſatos fuiſſe. Inſtit. Moral. lib. 8. cap. 26.*
(b) *in locum.* (c) *Prout recitatur à Bellar. de Euchar. lib. 3. c. 23. unum addit Scotus, quod minimè probandum eſt; Ante Lateranenſe Concilium non fuiſſe dogma fidei Tranſubſtantiationem.*

faith:

faith: and the firſt *Lateran* Councel was above 1100 years after Chriſt's birth. And *Alphonſus de Caſtro* delivers this memorable aſſertion: *Many things are known to later Authors, which the Antient writers were wholly ignorant of, for theſe ſeldome make any mention of Tranſubſtantiation.* (a)

3 The doctrine of Indulgencies and Purgatory (I joyn them both together as being neer of kin) of which Biſhop *Fiſher* hath this remarkable paſſage. (b) *No orthodox Chriſtian now doubts whether there be a Purgatory, though the Antients ſeldome or never mentioned it.* And a little after; *Conſidering that Purgatory was for a good while unknown,*— and again, *ſeeing then Purgatory was known and received in the Church ſo lately, who can wonder that Indulgencies were not uſed in the primitive Church?* So *Gabriel Biel:* (c) *Before the times of* St. *Gregory* (& that was 600 years after Chriſt) *there was little or no uſe of Indulgencies: but now they are uſed frequently, becauſe the Church without doubt hath the ſpirit of Chriſt, and therefore cannot erre.* That *ſine dubio* did his worke, for I was about to diſpute againſt his aſſertion, but that phraſe quite took away my courage. You ſee it is a courteſy that the Papiſts will condeſcend to prove their doctrine from Scrip-

(a) *Multa ſunt poſterioribus nota, quæ vetuſti illi ſcriptores prorſus ignoraverunt. Nam de Tranſubſtantiatione— vana eſt in antiquis ſcriptoribus mentio. lib.* 8. *contra hæreſes in verbo* Indulgentia.

(b) *Nemo jam dubitat orthodoxus an Purgatorium ſit, de quo tamen apud priſcos nulla vel quàm rariſſima fiebat mentio.* —— *Contemplantes igitur aliquamdiu Purgatorium incognitum fuiſſe.*—— *Cùm itaq; Purgatorium tam ſerò cognitum ac receptum fuerit Eccleſiæ, quis jam de Indulgentiis mirari poteſt, quòd in principio nullus fuerit earum uſus. Roffenſis in confutatione Lutheri, p.* 496.

(c) *Ante tempora Beati Gregorii modicus vel nullus fuit uſus Indulgentiarum. Nunc autem crebreſcit earum uſus, quia Eccleſia* ſine dubio *habet ſpiritum Chriſti, ideoq; non errat. in lect.* 57. *ſuper Canonem Miſſæ.*

ture and Fathers; whereas if they would ſtand upon their termes, they might argue thus: The concluſion without doubt is true, that the Church cannot erre; therefore a fig for the premiſes. So *Durandus:* (a) *Concerning Indulgencies little can be ſaid with any certainty, becauſe the Scripture ſpeaks not expreſly of them; and the holy Fathers Aug: Ambroſe, Hilary, Jerome do not at all mention them.* And *Cajetan* expreſly: (b) *No ſacred Scripture, no authority of antient Fathers, either Greek or Latine, hath brought the riſe of Indulgencies to our knowledge:* And yet (if you pleaſe to believe it) this and all the doctrines of the Romiſh Church are no other then ſuch as have been handed to them from the Apoſtles by all the antient Fathers in an uninterrupted ſucceſſion. I believe I could inſtance in twenty ſeveral Articles of the Romiſh Church, for which they have no colour of authority from any of the Fathers. But this may ſuffice for a Specimen of that reſpect which the Papiſts have for the Fathers, when they do not comply with their humors. The Fathers were ſo ignorant for a thouſand years together, that they did not underſtand, or ſo negligent that they did not inſtruct their people in that great myſtery of Tranſubſtantiation, (then which none was more neceſſary to be taught, becauſe none more difficult to believe.) The Fathers were ſo hard-hearted and cruel, that they would ſuffer ſouls to fry in Purgatory for hundreds of years together, whom they might have certainly releaſed by the help of Indulgencies. The Fathers were ſo indiſcreet, that they allowed their hearers to read the Scriptures, and have them in a

(a) *De Indulgentiis pauca dici poſſunt per certitudinẽ, quòd nec Scriptura expreſsè de eis loquitur.—Sancti etiam, ut Ambroſ. Hilar. Aug. Hieron. minimè loquuntur de Indulgentiis. in lib. 4. de ſentent. diſt. 20. qu. 3. cum. 4.*

(b) *Nulla Scriptura ſacra, nulla priſcorum Doctorum Græcorum vel Latinorum authoritas Indulgentiarum ortum ad noſtram deduxit notitiam. Opuſc. 15. cap. 1.*

vulgar

vulgar tongue. But *now it is not fit to be granted*, ſaith *Sixtus Sinenſis* (a). The Church of Rome hath got a monopoly of all knowledg, fidelity, tender-heartedneſs, (which you will wonder at) diſcretion, and all good qualities, and Infallibility into the bargain.

This is the excellency of the Romiſh faith, that it is calculated for any Meridian. Are any of their doctrines ſeemingly favoured by the Fathers? why then you ſhall have large Harangues concerning the authority of the Fathers, and their adherence to them. Are there any of their points, wherein the Fathers are either ſilent or opponent? why they are furniſhed with another ſtrain: that *the Fathers were but private Doctors, and had their failings. The chief of the Fathers had their falls*, ſaith *Bellarmine.* (b) *In the books of the Antients, which the Church reads as authentick, ſometimes are found wicked and heretical paſſages*, ſaith *Sixtus Sinenſis.** And ſo long as the Church of *Rome* reſerves to her ſelf alwayes a liberty of determining what paſſages are wicked and heretical, I trow ſhe is out of Gun-ſhot: *I do not value Origens judgment*, ſaith *Pererius.*(c) And that you may ſee the Papiſts do *inſanire cum ratione*, I pray you take notice, that what they want in conſcience and honeſt dealing, they make up in wit, and therefore have deviſed ſeveral ingenuous ſhifts, whereby they can elude the moſt pregnant teſtimonies of the Fathers levied againſt them. Sometimes they anſwer, that the Fathers ſpeak ἀγωνιστικῶς in oppoſition to the preſent Adverſary they were diſputing with, not διδασκαλικῶς as laying down their own poſitive opinion: thus *Perron*(d) and *Sixtus Senenſis*(e). Some-

(a) *lib. 6. Biblioth. annot. 152.*

(b) *Præcipui Patrum lapſi ſunt de verbo Dei. lib. 3. cap. 10.* * *In libris ſanctorum Doctorum, quos authentice legit Eccleſia, nonnunquam inveniuntur quædam prava & hæretica. Præfat. in lib. 5. Biblioth.*

(c) *In Rom. 3. diſp. 6.* (d) *lib. 1. de Euchar. p. 52.*

(e) *Præfat in lib. 5. Biblioth.*

times

times they ſay the Fathers ſpeak *declamatorio more*, hyperbolically, and by exceſs: thus *Sixtus Senenſis* anſwers our allegations from the Fathers for reading the Scripture.(a) Thus *Petavius* anſwers a clear paſſage of *Chryſoſtomes* againſt Auricular Confeſſion.(b) At other times they tell us, the Fathers did not alwaies ſpeak what they thought, but what they ſaw neceſſary to confute their Adverſaries: thus *Perron* anſwers the citations from the Fathers againſt creature-worſhip. If you alledge the Epiſtles of the Fathers, they tell you, the Fathers did not uſe fully to open their minds in thoſe writings: So *Perron* anſwers a Teſtimony of *Auſtins* againſt Tranſubſtantiation. Sometimes they plead, that the Fathers ſpeak the opinion of others, not their own; as *Bellarmine* anſwers a place out of *Hierom.*(c) If you bring any paſſage out of their Poems, they ſay the Fathers did uſe Poetical liberty, as *Bellarmine* anſwers to *Prudentius* (d). So juſt was the judgment of the Univerſity of *Doway* upon *Bertram*'s Book, of the body and bloud of Chriſt: *Seeing we bear many errors in the antient Fathers, and extenuate and excuſe them, and oft times by ſome diviſed fiction we deny and put a convenient ſenſe upon them, when they are oppoſed againſt us in diſputations with our adverſaries, we do not ſee why Bertram doth not deſerve the ſame equity, and diligent recognition.* (e) And thus they deale with the Fathers, when they diſpleaſe their humor, and oppoſe their doctrines. But if the Fathers deliver any thing that

(a) *lib.6. Bibl.annot.* 52. (b) *Animadverſ. in Epiphanii hæreſes.* 59. *pag.*244. (c) *lib. de gratia primi hominis. cap.* 11. (d) *De Purgatorio, lib.*2.*cap.*18.

(e) *Cùm in veteribus aliis plurimos feramus errores, & extenuemus, excuſemus, excogitato commento perſæpe negamus, & commodum iis ſenſum affingamus, dum opponuntur in diſputationibus, aut conflictionibus cum adverſariis, non videmus, cur non eandem æquitatem & diligentem recognitionem mereatur Bertramus. Vide Ind. expurg. in tit.B.*

ſeems

ſeems to countenance their conceits, then every paſſage of the Fathers is dogmatical, and every word an argument: then the Fathers have done playing and quibling, then they have opened their minds fully, and given us their moſt ſerious and laſt thoughts.

§. 8. And leſt you ſhould think it was only the opinions of ſeveral Fathers which they deſpiſed, I ſhall acquaint you with their practice in caſe of conſent of the Fathers, or the major part of them. That the Angels were corporeal, was the opinion of moſt of the Fathers ſaith *Pererius(a)*. For this opinion *Sixtus Senenſis* reckons up *Origen, Lactant: Athenaſ: Methodius, Hilarius, Damaſcenus, Caſſianus*, and the ſecound Councel of *Nice*: to whom *Maldonat* addes, as ὁμοφύεις, *Clemens Alexan: Theodoret, Tertullian, Ambroſe, Auguſtine*, &c. ſuch a Conſtellation one ſhall ſeldome find in any controverted opinion: Yet hear what *Senenſis* ſaith, *I think the contrary opinion is the trueſt.* If a Proteſtant had ſaid as much, what tumults and tragedies would it have raiſed in the Romane Court? how would all the world have rung with it? So again, that I may further lay open this Romiſh impoſture, I ſhall repreſent to the reader's conſideration that controverſy concerning the immaculate conception of the Bleſſed Virgin: what is the common and current doctrine of the Church of *Rome* at this day is ſufficiently known from the decree of the Councel of *Trent* concerning Original ſin, (in which decree they expreſly tell us, they would not have her included) (*b*), and from the ſevere conſtitutions of *Sixtus* the fourth,

(a) *Lib. 1 in Geneſ. diſ.* 106.

(b) *Declarat ſancta Synodus non eſſe ſuæ intentionis comprehendere in hoc decreto, ubi de peccato originali agitur, beatam & immaculatam Virginem Mariam Dei genetricem. Conc. Trident. in ſeſs.* 5.

and *Paul* the fifth, and *Gregory* the fifteenth Popes, againſt thoſe that ſhould preſume to teach this Doctrine, *that the Bleſſed Virgin was conceived in ſin*, and from the practice of divers Popiſh Univerſities, who have not only received the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin, but bind their members by ſolemn oath to own it, and from the writings of multitudes of the moſt eminent Popiſh writers, who poſitively aſſert it, as *Delrio*, *Henriquez*, *Azorius*, *Suarez*, *Vaſquez*, *Salmeron*, *Acoſta*, *Abulenſis*, *Canus*, *Navarrus*, and a world of others. Now let us ſee, whether in this point they made the conſent of Fathers their rule, or (which is equivalent) what was the judgment of the antient Fathers therein: which I ſhall give you from the mouths of the Papiſts themſelves, then which they cannot deſire a fairer tryal. Hear *Canus*: *All the antients that make any mention of this matter, have with one mouth aſſerted, that the Bleſſed Virgin was conceived in ſin, as Ambroſe, Aug: Chryſ: &c. and none of them contradicted that aſſertion:* and then he addes his *exceptions* and the Romiſh opinion: *That the argument from authority is weak, and the contrary doctrine is probably and piouſly defended in the Church of Rome* (*a*). And he confeſſeth, *he knew no other way to confute this argument of Eraſmus againſt the authority of the Fathers, then by ſaying the opinion was not* de fide, *or no matter of faith.* (*b*) A remedy as bad as the diſeaſe.

1. Becauſe the opinion is moſt abſurd that a Doctrine

(*a*) *Sancti* (*antiqui*) *omnes, qui in eius rei mentionem inciderunt, uno ore aſſeverârunt Beatam Virginem in peccato originali conceptam,— & nullus ſanctorum contravenit: Infirmum tamen ex omnium authoritate argumentum ducitur, quin potius contraria ſententia probabiliter & piè defenditur, loc. theol. lib.* 7. *c.* 1.

(*b*) *ibid. cap* 3.

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is not *de fide* till the Pope or Councell have determined it, from whence would follow amongſt many other groſſe abſurdities. 1. That it was not *de fide* while Chriſt lived that Jeſus was the Meſſias, no Councell having determined it. 2. That moſt of the Articles of the Chriſtian Religion were not *de fide* before the Councell of Nice. 3. That God revealing a truth in his Holy Scriptures cannot oblige our faith as much as a Councell, revealing it in their Decrees. But I need ſay no more of this, becauſe it is rejected by diverſe of their own moſt Learned Authors: *It is the common opinion of Doctors, that a Councell doth not make a thing to be of Faith, but denies, or declares, that ſuch a thing is, or formerly was* de fide, *as the Holy Fathers abundantly confirme*, ſaith White (a).

2. Becauſe this was *de fide* according to their own Doctrine: For the Councell of *Baſil* had poſitively defined and determined it, as pious and agreeable to Faith, reaſon, and Scripture, to be embraced by all Catholicks; and that it ſhould be lawfull to no man to teach the contrary. (b) This put S *Clara* ſo hard to it, that he is forced to this horrible ſhift, that they onely defined it, *tanquam piam & conſonam fidei.* Now the termes *tanquam & conſonam* are termes of diminution (c). But to returne; *Salmeron* treating of this point tels us, that his Adverſaries reckon 200, others 300 Fathers againſt his and the Romiſh Doctrine of the immaculate conception: Well, what is his Anſwer? Really it is ſo full of Hereſy that I fear they will chide me for tranſlating it: he tels you, *The Argument from Authority is weak: I Anſwer*

(a) *Communis Doctorum ſententia fert Concilium non facere aliquid de fide, ſed decernere eſſe ſeu prius fuiſſe de fide, ut Sancti etiam Patres abunde confirmant. De fide & Theologia. Tract. 2. Sect. 22.*

(b) *Seſ. 36.* (c) *In ſyſtemate fidei cap. 35. p. 377.*

(faith

(ſaith he) *from* Exod. 23. 2. *Thou ſhalt not ſpeak in a cauſe to incline after many to wreſt judgment*, *as* Auguſtine *anſwered the Donatiſts*; *it was a ſigne that a cauſe wanted truth*, *which leaned upon Authority*; *That the younger Doctors ſee further then the antients*: that is to ſay, the Romiſh Doctors are wiſer then the Antient Fathers. (a) I commend theſe paſſages to the care of my Lords the Inquiſitors, the next time the purging humour takes them, they richly deſerve a roome in the *Iudex expurgatorius*.

And yet theſe are the onely adorers of the Antient Fathers, that tell you *We do not receive part of the Doctrine of the Fathers*, *and reject part*, *but we embrace it all* ſaith *Duræus*(b). *We hold the whole Volumes* ſaith *Campian*(c). *Theſe* are they that hold the Fathers to be *uncorrupted judges of Controverſies*, *whom God would not ſuffer to fall into error*, *and lead others into it*, ſaith *Coſterus* (d). Will you ſee more of this miſtery of iniquity? I ſhall onely name the reſt: Diverſe Popiſh Authors of prime note acknowledge that it was the generall opinion of the Fathers, That the Sacrament of the Lords Supper ought to be given to Infants. So *Maldonate*, *The Opinion of* St *Auguſtine*, *and Innocent the firſt*, (a Pope, and therefore his

(a) *Argumentum ab authoritate infirmum eſt*—*Reſpondemus ex verbo Dei* Exod. 23. 1. *In judicio plurimorum non acquiſces ſententiæ, ni a vero devies cum* Auguſtinus *reſpondeat Donatiſtis ſignum eſſe cauſæ à veritatis nervo deſtitutæ, quæ ſoli multorum Authoritati, qui errari poſſunt innititur Doctores quo juniores, eo perſpicatiores ſunt.* Diſp. 51. in Rom. 5.

(b) *Nos patrum Doctrinam non aliquâ ex parte admittimus, aliâ repudiamus, ſed integram amplectimur.* *Contra* Whitak. *fol.* 140.

(c) *Tenemus integra volumina.* *In decem rationibus.* rat. 5.

(d) *Incorrupti ſunt judices controverſiarum, neque enim credibile eſt eos, preſertim in rebus quæ fidem attingunt, à Deo ſic deſtitutos fuiſſe, ut ipſi errarint, doctrinâque ſuâ alios in errorem induxerint.* In Euchir. p. 64.

opinion

opinion infallibly true) *flouriſhed in the Church for* 600 *years that the Euchariſt was neceſſary to Infants* (a) That the Lords Supper ſhould be receaved by the people in both kinds. For the Councell of Conſtance in that very place where it takes away one kind, (the Cup) do acknowledge that the uſe of both kinds by the people was inſtituted by Chriſt, and enjoyed by the people in the antient Church (b) That the Saints departed, ſhould not be admitted to the viſion of God, before the day of judgment: So much *Perron* confeſſeth, and *Sixtus Senenſis*, (c) That the Saints ſhould raigne with Chriſt a thouſand years, that *Pamelius* grants (d). In all theſe and ſeverall others, it is known that the Church of Rome aſſerts the contrary, how truly, and juſtly I diſpute not, nor is it materiall to my purpoſe, which is onely to ſhew how upon all occaſions, where need requires they do as little regard the Authority of the Fathers as any, whom they moſt traduce for ſo doing. But would you know the miſtery of this? why, *The Fathers are not reckoned as Fathers when they deliver any thing which they did not receive from the Church*, ſaith *Duræus* (e), In earneſt, that ſaying deſerved a Cardinals Cap. And *Baily* the Jeſuite ſeconds him in it, where putting this queſtion; *Whether the Authority of the Doctors* (Fathers) *ought to be admitted*; *he anſwers: Yes, as far as the Church approves of them* (f).

The Fathers have Authority with us as far as we pleaſe;

(a) *Miſſam facio* Auguſtini & Innocentii. 1. *ſententiam qui ſexcentos circiter annos viguit in Eccleſiâ Euchariſtiam etiam infantibus neceſſariam.* in Joh. 6. verſ. 53. (b) *Seſſione* 13. (c) *Lib.* 6. *Bibl. Annot.* 345. (d) *In notis ſuper* Cypriani *hortationem ad martyrium.*

(e) *Neque enim patres cenſentur, cum ſuum aliquid, quod ab Eccleſiâ non acceperunt, ſcribunt vel docent: non.* Whit. *ubi ſupra.* (f) *Debetne admitti Doctorum* (Patrum) *Authoritas? Debet quatenus ab Eccleſia approbatur in Catechiſ.*

I will adde a third (that you may ſee it is a ruled caſe:) and that is *Greſſerus*. *A Father* (ſaith he) *is one that feeds the Church with wholeſome Doctrine: but if inſtead of corne he give chaff or tares, he is not now a Father but a ſtep-Father, not a teacher but a ſeducer.* *

When the Fathers ſay any thing which ſeems to countenance their poſitions, then they are Fathers, uncorrupt judges, infallible interpreters, and Purgatory is too mild a puniſhment for him that ſhall goe one haires breadth from them. But if the Fathers will once begin to take upon them, if they will exceed thoſe bounds the Pope hath ſet them, and contradict his intereſt or opinion, then it is time to take them a peg lower, then they call them Fathers, but make children of them: They had better have held their Tongues; for now all comes out, and the Papiſts are the Chams (as they call the Proteſtants) who uncover their Fathers nakedneſſes: Then *Euſebius* (who when he is Orthodox in the Romane account paſſeth for a *moſt famous Writer, a moſt learned man, and a Catholick* with *Lindanus*, (a), *Sixtus Senenſis* (b) and others) is all on a ſudden tranſubſtantiated into an Arrian Heretick with *Coſterus* (c) and *Baronius* (d). Then poor *Tertullian* (who, when he ſpeaks righteous things paſſeth for *a moſt noble Author, the chiefe of all the Latine Fathers* with *Lindanus*, (e)) is not ſo much as a *man of the Church*;

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* *Nam Eccleſiæ pater ille dicitur qui Eccleſiam ſalutari Doctrinâ alit & paſcit —— Jam verò ſi pro ſalutifero Doctrinæ pabulo —— offerat & adducatur lolium & zizania —— perverſorum dogmatum —— eatenus non Pater eſt ſed vitricus, non Doctor ſed ſeductor.* In lib. 2. *de jure ac more prohibendi libros noxios* cap. 10.

(a) *Panopl. l. cap.* 17. §. *inprimis.* (b) *Apud Baron. in Anal. tom.* 3. *an.* 340. (c) *Hæreticus Arrianus, in Apologiâ contra Grevinchovium* c. 8. n. 9. (d) *Loco jam citato.*

(e) *Nobilis admodum author, latinorum omnium facile princeps. Panopl. lin:* 1. *cap.* 23.

nay,

nay, he is *an hereticall Author*, *an hereſiarch*, *a Montaniſt* ſay *Azorius*(a)and *Bellarm*(b). Then *Origen* (who when he is a good boy paſſeth for *a witneſſe beyond exception* with *Duræus* (c) *another maſter of the Churches after the Apoſtles as* Jerome *calls him* ſaith *Lindanus* (d)) is a meer *ſchiſmatick* ſaith *Canus* (e) *the Father of the Arrians and Eunomians* ſaith *Maldonate* (f). Then *Conſtantine* himſelfe, (that you may ſee the Church of Rome is not guilty of reſpect of perſons) *is not much to be regarded he was a greater Emperor then Doctor ſaith* Bellarm. (g)Then Lactantius *is better skilled in* Tully, *then in the Scripture and Victorinus was a Martyr but wanted learning* ſaith *Bellarmine* (h). Nay, I think both he and the reſt of the Fathers wanted wit as well as learning: for if they would but have blotted out all Anti-Romiſh paſſages (which might have been done with one Blot, provided it reached from the beginning to the end of their works) they had all paſſed for Orthodox and admirable men, and we had not heard one word of their infirmities or miſcarriages.

What need I trouble my ſelfe and the Reader, with ſaying that which all the World knows concerning the Papiſts receding from the common ſence of the Fathers in expoſitions of Scripture, and preferring new interpretations before them, (not fearing their own Tridentine thunderbolt, *That no man ſhould dare to interpret Scripture*

(a) *Tom.*1. *Moral. lib.*8. *ca.*16. (b) *Lib.*1. *de Sanctis ca.*5. (c) *Teſtis omni ſane exceptione major. contra* Whitak *ſol.*109. (d) *Alterum Eccleſiarum poſt Apoſtolos Magiſtrum ajebat Hieronymus. Panop. lib.*3. *cap.*16. (e) *Loc. com. lib.*7. *cap.*3. *num.*11. (f) *In Johan.*1.3. (g) *De verbo Dei l.*4. *c.*11. (h) *Lactantius magis librorum Ciceronis quam Scripturarum Sanctarum peritus. Victorinus martyr quidem fuit, ſed ei eruditio defuit. Lib.*1. *de ſanctis c.*5. *in fine.*

againſt

againſt the common conſent of the Fathers, (a)) For which I ſhall onely referre the reader to thoſe places where he may be more fully ſatisfied, that this was the opinion and practiſe of the Learned and approved Romaniſts, as *Cajetan* (b) *Pererius*, (c) *Maldonate* (d) and ſeverall others (e).

§. 9. In ſhort, to ſtrike the buſineſſe dead, you ſhall have the poſitive judgment of the principall pillars of the Romiſh Church: *Sacred Doctrine* (ſaith *Aquinas*) *uſeth Authority of Scripture as a neceſſary Argument, but the Authorities of other Doctors of the Church onely as a probable Argument: for our faith leanes upon the revelation made to the Apoſtles and Prophets, not to other Doctors* (f). *The Authorities of the Fathers without the Scripture doth not oblige my faith*, ſaith *Biel* (g). *It is the property of the Holy Scriptures, that there is no error in it which needs correction* ſaith *Baronius* (h). *The Writings of the Fathers* (ſaith *Bellarmine in totidem terminis*) *are not a rule, and have not authority to oblige me* (i): And not contented to aſſert, he elſewhere offers proofs of the invalidity of the

(a) Seſſione 4. b *In Præfatione in Pentateuchum.* (c) *Lib.* 3. *in Gen. qu.* 5. *n.* 45. (d) *In multis locis* Joh. 8. 56. *Mat.* 16. 18. *&* 19.
(e) *Stella in Luc.* 10. 21. *Baronius in Annal. Tom.* 1. *An.* 34. *Patres in interpretatione Scripturarum non ſemper —— Catholicam Eccleſiam ſequuntur.*
(f) *Sacra Doctrina Authoritatibus Canonicæ Scripturæ utitur propriè ex neceſſitate Argumentando, authoritatibus autem aliorum doctorum Eccleſiæ arguendo ex propriis, ſed probabiliter. Innititur enim fides noſtra revelationi Apoſtolis & Prophetis factæ —— non autem revelationi, ſi quæ fuit aliis Doctoribus factæ. Part.* 1. *qu.* 1. *art.* 8.
(g) *Authoritates patrum ſine Scriptura non obligant ad fidem. Lect.* 41. *in Canon Miſſæ.*
(h) *Divinæ tantum Scripturæ, nihil habere erroris, quod corrigatur. Tom.* 4. *Annal. An.* 369. (i) *Patrum Scripta non ſunt regula, nec habent authoritatem obligandi. de Concil. lib.* 2. *cap.* 12. §. *Dico ſecundo.*

Fathers

Fathers without, and their perfect ſubjection to the Authority of the Church and Biſhop of Rome. *The Fathers execute the office of Doctors, but Counſels and Popes execute the office of a Judge committed to them by God*(a). And againe: *The Pope hath no Fathers in the Church, but all are his ſonnes: No wonder then that the ſonnes are ſubject to the Father, not the Fathers to the Sonnes* (b). Thus *Gregory de Valentiâ* cuts the knot he cannot untie: *If the conſent of Doctors cannot be made out, the Pope may uſe his Authority* (c). Really theſe Jeſuites are moſt ingenious fellowes, they are reſolved never to be at a non-plus: when they ſaw the Scripture was not for their turnes, they vote that ſhould not be judge of controverſies and fled to the Fathers. When they ſaw multitudes of notable paſſages cited out of the Fathers deſtructive to their Hierarchy, then it muſt be conſent of the Fathers: Now becauſe they know they cannot make out the conſent of the Fathers for any one Article of their Faith. Here is a *Salvo* for that, the Popes Authority is evident: It is but ſaying, that is a firſt Principle, and all controverſies are at an end. By this time I think I may expect the Reader that hath but a dram of ingenuity in him muſt needs acknowledge that the Authority of the Fathers is neither *ex veritate rei* (in truth) nor *ex opinione Pontificiorum* (in the judgment of the Papiſts) a ſolid foundation for a Papiſts Faith which was the Propoſition to be proved: I ſhall diſmiſſe this with two Obſervations.

(a) *Auguſtinus & ceteri Patres in commentariis fungebantur officio doctorum, at Concilia & Pontifices funguntur officio judicis à Deo ſibi commiſſo lib.3.de verbo Dei cap.10.* (b) *Pontifex non habet ullos in Eccleſiâ Patres, ſed omnes filios. Quid verò mirum eſt, ſi non pater filiis, ſed filii patri ſuo ſubjiciantur. Lib.2.de Romano Pontifice* cap.27.

(c) *Si de Doctorum conſenſu non aperte conſtaret, ſua tunc conſtat Authoritas Pontificî in Analyſi lib.8.cap.8.pag.119.*

1. How

1. How ſweetly the Romiſh Doctors agree in that which they acknowledge to be a principall foundation of Faith, *viz.* the Authority of the Fathers.

2. I ſhall leave this Syllogiſme, taken out of their own Authors, to the conſideration of the prudent Reader: *If you take away the authority of Fathers and Councels, all things in the Church are uncertaine,* ſaith *Eccius*, as you ſaw before: But *Bellarmine* and others, have here taken away the Authority of the Fathers: And in the next Chapter you ſhall ſee they take away the Authority of Councels: *Ergo,* There is nothing certaine in the Romiſh Church: Thus I have ſhewed that the Faith of the Papiſts hath no ſure ground or foundation in the Authority of the Pope, Scriptures, or Fathers: Now I come to the fourth particular, the Authority and Infallibility of the Church and Councels which is the *ſacra anchora* the principall refuge of a languiſhing cauſe.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Authority and Infallibility of the Church and Councels.

Sect. 1. LEt us therefore examine in the next place, whether the Councels will ſtand them in better ſtead. Whether the ſplendid name and Authority of the Church be a ſolid and ſufficient foundation of Faith. In order to which I ſhall lay down this propoſition. That the Authority of the Church and Councels is no ſufficient foundation for a Papiſts faith: This I ſhall more fully diſcuſſe, becauſe here it is that very many of the Popiſh Doctors do build their hopes, and lay the foundation of their faith. And here indeed they have greateſt appearance of probability.

A generall Councel rightly congregated cannot erre in the faith, ſaith *Alphonſus de Caſtro*(a). Councels repreſent the Catholick Church which cannot erre, and *therefore they cannot erre* ſaies *Eccius* and *Tapperus*(b). *The decrees of generall Councels have as much weight as the Holy Goſpels,* ſaith *Coſterus*(c). *Councels approved and confirmed by the Pope cannot erre,* ſay *Canus* (d) and *Bellar. Councels, being the higheſt Eccleſiaſticall Judicatories cannot erre* ſaith *Tannerus*(e). *The decrees of Councels are the Oracles of the Holy Ghoſt,* ſaith *Stapleton*: Surely now I may cry out εὑρηκα: Here is the ground and pillar of truth, and at leaſt——*ſpes altera Romæ.*

§. 2. 1. Then I would know whence comes this Infallibility of Councels? It muſt be from Gods promiſe (for they do not pretend it is any natural inhærent property of any man or men ſingle or conjunct.) And this promiſe muſt be made known to us by divine Revelation, *i. e.* either by Scripture or Tradition (for other revelation they do not pretend to:) Thus farre they and wee are agreed: Now I aſſume, That the Infallibility of Councels is not revealed to us, neither in the one nor in the other.

§. 3. 1. Not in the Traditions of the Fathers; for among all the Traditions mentioned by them you ſhall not find this concerning the Infallibility of Councels: Nor have our Adverſaries (that I know of) alledged one conſiderable antient Father, aſſerting that ſuch a Tradition was conveyed to them from the Apoſtles, though there had been ſuch a Tradition, they who were ſo carefull to enumerate all the Traditions of far leſſe conſequence, which pretended to an Apoſtolicall Original, neither ſhould nor would have omitted to acquaint the Church with ſo important a Tradition, as this is now ſuppoſed to be: And this

(a) *Concilium generale rectè congregatum non poteſt errare in fide.* lib. 4. *adverſus hæreſes in verbo Concilium.* (b) *Contilia repræſentant Eccleſiam Catholicam quæ errare non poteſt. Ergo etiam ipſa errare non poſſunt.* Ecchias in Enchir. c. 2. Tappor. in Art. 1. Lovan. p. 5. (c) *Decreta Conciliorum generalium—— idem habent pondus & momentum, quod ſanctia Dei Evangelia.* in Enchiridio p. 46. (d) Lib. 5. loc. com. c. 4. (e) Bel. de Conciliis—lib. 2. c. 2. (f) *In parte 3. Anat. Dem. 10. Sect. 222.* (g) *In Reſect. Contro. q. 3. art. 4. p. 610.*

might ſuffice for Anſwer, till our Adverſaries give us an inſtance of ſome ſuch Tradition.

§. 4. But becauſe Tradition and the teſtimony of the Fathers is their chiefe Pillar of the Infallibility of Councels (the wiſer ſort of them being ſenſible of the impertinency of their Scripture allegations:) I ſhall conſider this a little more largely then at firſt I intended, and ſhall indeavour to make good foure things, which if proved, will give a deadly ſtroke at the root of infallibility. 1. If there were ſuch a Tradition among the Fathers as is pretended, it is no ſolid and ſufficient foundation for our Faith. 2. If the antients did believe the infallibility of Councels, yet it doth not follow they believed it upon the account of ſuch a Tradition. 3. It doth not appear that the Antiens did believe the Infallibility of Councels. 4. It doth appeare that the Antients did believe the fallibility of Councels.

§. 5. The firſt propoſition is this; That if ſome of the Fathers did tell us they had ſuch a Tradition among them as is pretended concerning the Infallibility of Councels, it is no ſolid and ſufficient foundation for our Faith, becauſe the Fathers were ſubject to errours and miſtakes, as we have now proved, and as the Papiſts confeſſe, at leaſt they might erre in matters of fact (for in ſuch things they acknowledge the Pope himſelfe to be fallible.) And this was purely a queſtion of fact, whether ſuch a Tradition were delivered to them. And that the fathers were ofttimes deceived in the point of Traditions, and in matters of fact is acknowledged by ſeverall of the moſt learned Papiſts; and *Baronius* gives us diverſe examples of their miſtakes in ſundry parts of his *Annals*, and that too amongſt the firſt Fathers, who had farre greater opportunities to know the truth then their followers, and greater integrity to deliver nothing contrary to their knowledge, and much more there might

miſtakes

miſtakes be committed by thoſe that came after them.

If it be ſaid, That although ſome particular Fathers might miſtake in the matters of Tradition, yet the Fathers conſenting therein are Infallible.

This is already anſwered in the former Chapter, to which I ſhall here adde; that it is impoſſible for us at this diſtance to underſtand the conſent of the Fathers, *e. g.* of the firſt or ſecond Age, there being ſuch a ſmall and inconſiderable remnant left of them like two or three planks after a common ſhipwrack. *Gregory de Valentia* confeſſeth even of the Doctours of the age we live in that *it ſeldome happens that we can ſufficiently underſtand the opinion of all the Doctors that live in one Age* (a). How much more hard, nay, impoſſible muſt it needs be to underſtand the minde of that Age which is gone 1500 years agoe? And *Melchior Canus* confeſſeth, *That the Authority of moſt of the Holy* (Fathers) *if a few did contradict them, will not afford a Divine a ſolid Argument* (b). So that if ſuch a tradition had been delivered by ſome, yea the major part of the Fathers, if ſome others, though fewer had contradicted it, Faith hath loſt its foundation, and this might be done (and ſuch things in all probability were oft done) though no footſteps of it are come to the memory of Poſterity. As *Auſtin* ſpeaks of *Cyprian* when he was preſſed with his Authority, he anſwers: *Happily he did recant, though we know it not: For neither were all things done among the Biſhops at that time committed to writing, nor do we know all things that were committed to Writing* (c).

(a) *Fatendum eſt raro accidere poſſe, ut quæ ſit Doctorum omnium ejus tempore viventium de religione ſententia, ſatis cognoſcatur.* Lib. 8. Analyſ. cap. 8. pag. 119. (b) *Plurimum Sanctorum Authoritas, reliquis licet paucioribus reclamantibus, firma argumenta Theologo ſufficere & præſtare non valet.* Loc. theol. lib. 7. cap. 3.

(c) *Fortaſſe factum ſed neſcimus. Neque enim omnia, quæ illo tempore inter Epiſcopos geſta ſunt, memoriæ literiſque mandari potuerunt, aut omnia quæ mandata ſunt, novimus.* Lib. 2. con. Donat. cap. 4.

And if this was conſiderable in *Auſtins* dayes, who lived within two hundred years of thoſe times, how much more weighty muſt it be to us that come twelve hundred years after him? Now then to put a caſe (becauſe this conſideration ſhakes the very pillars of Popery, and overthrowes almoſt all their pretenſions from Tradition and the Authority of the Fathers.) Suppoſe the Major part of the Antient Fathers had ſaid *in terminis*, that the Biſhop of Rome was ſupreme head and infallible governour of the Church (though nothing was further from their thoughts) and ſuppoſe a leſſe number of the Fathers did in that age contradict it, though the contradictours happily either did not commit their opinion to Writing, or if they did, their Writings might be ſuppreſſed by the major part (as hath been the lot of moſt Ages) or by the injury of time are loſt (which the Papiſts cannot ſay was impoſſible for the Writings of the Fathers, ſeeing they tell us that *de facto* ſome of the Books of Holy Scripture are loſt:) The next age comes and underſtands the truth of what I have now ſuppoſed: The queſtion is, Whether the Authority of the Major part of the Fathers of the former age be a ſufficient foundation for their Faith in the Popes Supremacy and infallibility? *Melchiôr Canus* ſaith No: Now then the next age or ages having happily forgotten ſuch contradictions (which the Age immediately next remembred.) The queſtion is whether that foundation which was inſufficient to the precedent Age, is now through their ignorance of ſuch contradiction become ſufficient to the following Age? if they affirme it, it would become the Jeſuites in point of gratitude to Write a Panegyrick in praiſe of Ignorance which is it ſeems, not onely the Mother of Devotion, but of aſſurance and certainty of knowledge; if they deny it, they confeſſe the weakneſſe of their aſſertion: In ſhort, he that will lay the foundation of his

Faith

Faith upon ſuch a quickſand, muſt either prove the negative that there was no ſuch contradiction as we have ſuppoſed (which is impoſſible) or confeſſe his Faith relies upon the Sand (which is dreadfull.) And againe admit they had the conſent of Fathers in this Tradition. I have given ſeverall inſtances, wherein they acknowledge they have departed from the conſent of Fathers, and that there were ſeverall Doctrines which (if we believe the Papiſts when they tell us the Fathers owned no Doctrine, but what they had by Tradition) the Fathers receaved by Tradition, wherein they were *de facto* miſtaken, and why might they not be miſtaken in this? Wee all know how generall the Millenary opinion was among the Fathers of the ſecond and third Centuries, though it be ſaid all came from the miſtake of *Papias*, an honeſt, but credulous Doctor. And dare theſe men venture their Souls upon it, that *Papias* was the onely credulous Author? and that this was the onely miſtaken Tradition? or that it was impoſſible for thoſe Fathers who were ſo many of them impoſed upon by one credulous perſon in one point to be impoſed upon by another in other points? All theſe and many other uncertainties muſt not onely be allowed but are laid in the very foundation of Infallibility.

§. 6. The ſecond particular is this: That if the Antients did believe the Infallibility of Councels, yet it doth not follow they believed it upon the account of ſuch a Tradition, for they might believe it upon other grounds. It is evident they believed many (nay, to ſpeak the truth all) Doctrines becauſe they apprehended them to be contained in the Scriptures; and why might it not be ſo with this? Why might not the Fathers believe this (if they did believe it) upon the ſame miſapprehenſions and miſtakes (which the Papiſts at this day runne into) concerning the ſence of thoſe Scriptures which are alledged for the Infallibility of Councels? And conſequently

ſequently the Fathers opinions of the Infallibility of Councels doth not argue that they received ſuch a Tradition from the Apoſtles, but only that this was their opinion, wherein, no leſſe then in other points, they were ſubject to errors as I have proved.

§. 7. The third Propoſition is this: It doth not appeare that the antient Fathers did believe the Infallibility of Councels. For triall hereof I ſhall refer my ſelf to thoſe Arguments and Authorities which are alledged for the proof of the contrary poſition: *Bel* brings three Arguments, to ſhew that the Antient Fathers held that generall Councels could not erre and not one of them ſpeak to the point:

His firſt Argument is this, *They affirme that the ſentence of a generall Councell in the cauſe of Faith is the laſt judgment of the Church, from which there lies no appeale, and which cannot be made void or retracted: Hence it evidently followes that ſuch Counſels cannot erre, becauſe elſe it were a very unjuſt thing to compell Chriſtians that they ſhould not appeale from that judgment which may be erronious* (a). I Anſwer, 1. S^t *Auſtin* did hold that the ſentence of a generall Councell might be retracted, though not by private Chriſtians, yet by a following generall Councell, *former generall Councels* (ſaith he) *are corrected by the later*, of which more by and by, and that is enough to ſhew he did not believe it infallible. 2. The Conſequence is weak and denied by the Proteſtants, and therefore might be denied by the Fathers: If the conſequence be infirme now, it could not be ſtrong then; and for this we have the Teſtimony of a Papiſt S. *Clara*, who tels us, that Calvin, *and* Robertus Baronius, *and all the Proteſtants, and ſome others who deny the Infallibility of generall Councels do nevertheleſſe acknowledge it to be the*

(a) *Affirmant primum Concilii generalis ſententiam eſſe in cauſâ fidei ultimum Eccleſiæ judicium, à quo appellari non poſſit, quodque nullo modo irritari vel retractari queat. Hinc autem apertiſſimè conſtat ejuſmodi Concilia non errare* &c. lib. 2. de Concil. auctor. c. 3. *Ju-*

ſupreme Judge of Controverſies upon Earth, and that ſuch a Councell hath a determining and deciſive power, which all are externally bound to obey to prevent Schiſme (a). Nor is it unjuſt, but neceſſary for the preſervation of order and prevention of worſe miſchiefes, that there ſhould be a Supreme though fallible Authority, beyond which there might be no appeale: And as it is no injuſtice that there lies no appeale beyond the Supreme Magiſtrate in civill affaires, though he be confeſſed to be Fallible: ſo neither can it be any injuſtice that there is no appeale beyond the Supreme Eccleſiaſticall Judicatory in Church matters though it be fallible, provided it be granted (which the Proteſtants with the Fathers do aſſert and have proved) that ſuch Judicatories do not bind the conſcience but onely regulate the outward Acts, and prevent viſible Confuſions.

§. 8. And the ſame Anſwer will ſerve for *Bellarmines* ſecond Argument, which is this: *The Fathers and Councels teach that they who do not acquieſſe in the ſentence of generall Councels are Hereticks and deſerve excommunications, and therefore they thought ſuch Councels could not erre* (b).

Anſwer, 1. I deny the Conſequence againe for the now mentioned reaſon: The civill cutting of ſuch as reſiſt the ſentence of the Magiſtrate doth as fully prove the Magiſtrates Infallibility, as the Eccleſiaſticall cutting of ſuch as do not reſt in the ſentence of a Councell doth prove the Councels Infallibility. 2. The Fathers did not account men Hereticks meerly becauſe they reſted not in the ſentence of a Councell as ſuch (for then they

(a) *Fatetur* Baronius *Concilium generale eſſe ſupremum in terris Controverſiarum Judicem —— determinativam & deciſivam poteſtatem* (*agnoſcunt*) *Adverſarii cui omnes exterius obtemperare tenentur, ne ſchiſma fiat*: S. Clara. in ſyſtem. fidei cap. 20. num. 14. et 15.

(b) *Docent Patres & Concilia eſſe hereticos & excommunicandos omnes qui non acquieſcunt Conciliis plenariis. Ex quo manifeſtè ſequitur eos putaſſe Concilia non poſſe errare.* Bellar. *ubi ſuprà.*

ſhould

ſhould have been Hereticks for rejecting the *Arrian* Councels) but becauſe the Doctrine which they oppoſed, and the Councels aſſerted was true; and ſo it was the verity of the Doctrine, not the Conciliarity (if you will pardon the word) of the ſentence by which they judged of Hereticks. That cannot be an Argument that the Fathers believed the Infallibility of Councels, which is common to thoſe that deny their Infallibility; but the calling of thoſe Hereticks who do not acquieſſe in the ſentence of Councels is common to thoſe that deny the Infallibility of Councels; for the Proteſtants themſelves have branded and cenſured and ſometimes put to death as Hereticks ſuch men as in fundamentall points of Religion have receded from their publick Confeſſors of Faith, and the decrees of their Synods, without ever pretending to Infallibility.

But (that I may improve the Cardinals Argument for him to the higheſt) Put caſe the Fathers had ſaid that men were bound to believe all the aſſertions of their generall Councell, yet this doth not evince that they thought them Infallible; I prove it plainly thus. The Papiſts maintaine that people are bound to believe their Paſtours, and to receive all their Doctrines without examination or hæſitation (according to that which *Stapleton* ſo largely and frequently defends; That Paſtours are ſimply to be heard in all things) and yet they do not hold theſe Paſtours to be Infallible: So they tell us by vertue of that Text, *Mat.*23.2. The Jewes were bound to believe all the Doctrines publikely taught by the Scribes and Phariſees, and yet they do not hold that the particular Scribes and Phariſees (of whom that Text ſpeaks) were infallible: And the Fathers might juſtly ſay all men were bound to believe all the decrees of their Councels which then were paſt, not that they thought Councels were Infallible, but becauſe they judged all their decrees

crees true and conſonant to the Scripture: otherwiſe how little they valued the decrees of Councels, when they apprehended them repugnant to the holy Scripture may be ſufficiently underſtood by their contempt of the Arrian Councels.

3. There is in this argument the ſame σφάλμα or error which was through moſt of the arguments and teſtimonies of the Fathers pretended in this cauſe, viz. they argue from the authority of Councels to their infallibility, and how invalid the conſequence is appears from this undeniable argument. Maſters, Magiſtrates, Parents, Biſhops, and Provincial Councels have Authority, but not Infallibility. If all that the Fathers ſay to that purpoſe were put upon the rack, it would prove nothing but this, that they thought (what the Proteſtants grant) that general Councels were the ſupreme Judicatories of the Church, from which was no appeal, and in which all men were obliged peaceably to acqueſce; but that doth not infer Infallibility, as we have ſeen.

§ 9. *Bellarmine's* third argument is this *The Fathers teach, that the Decrees of general Councels are Divine, and from the Spirit of God; from whence follows, that they were not ſubject to error (a).* And this he confirms by the teſtimony of *Conſtantine* (who, now he is orthodox is grown conſiderable, though when he was alledged againſt him, he was a greater Prince then Doctor, as we heard even now) *Greg. Nazianz. Cyrill*, and *Leo*, who call the decrees of the Councel of *Nice* divine, and ſay they were ordered by the Spirit of God: and ſo ſay I too. And it is true of all the decrees of all Councels, (nay of all the Sermons of Miniſters) which are collected from Scripture and

(a) *Patres docent eſſe divina & à Spiritu ſancto edita decreta generalium Conciliorum, Ergo*: ubi ſuprà.

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conformable to it (ſuch as the *Nicene* Decrees were) that they are divine Oracles. But then their Divinity, and that, which is the conſequent of Divinity, Infallibility, ariſeth not from the Authority decreeing them, (which being but humane, could not make the decrees divine) but from the matter of the decrees which was taken out of Scripture, (as *Bellarmine* confeſſeth (*a*), and therefore divine. But if *Bellar:* thinks from this particular caſe to draw a general concluſion, I muſt make bold to ſtop him in his careere, till he hath told me whither he think this argument ſolid. The Fathers held the decrees of the Councel of *Nice* to be divine, and (ſay it were) infallibly true: Therefore they thought the decrees of all Councels divine and infallible, and conſequently the *Anti-Nicene* and *Arrian* Councels. If he can diſgeſt this, I will ſay he hath a ſtomach as good as his conſcience is bad.

§ 10. I think it is time to take my leave of the Cardinal, and come to the Fryar S. *Clara* (who being an ingenuous perſon, and coming laſt, hath doubtleſſe ſelected the beſt weapons) and his great argument I find to be this: That *the Fathers did generally own the Infallibility of the Catholick Church, and conſequently the Infallibility of general Councels, which are the ſame with the Church, and their definitions are the determinations of the Church*: this he largely proſecutes cap. 20, 21, 22. For Anſwer, let me premiſe what I have proved, that if this were the opinion of the Fathers, yet ſeeing that they confeſſe themſelves to be men ſubject to like paſſions and miſtakes with others according to that of *Auſtin*, *Neither do you think, that becauſe we are Biſhops, we are not liable to irregular motions, but rather let us conceive that we live danger-*

(a) *Concilium Nicenum cùm definivit Filium Patri eſſe ὁμόσιον, concluſionem deduxit ex Scripturis.* de Conciliis lib. 2. cap. 12.

geronſly

rouſly amongſt the ſnares of temptations, becauſe we are men (a). And ſeeing the Papiſts confeſſe they have erred in many things, therefore this, if it were true, will afford no ſolid and ſufficient foundation for their faith; but I ſhall forgive them that infirmity: The argument (however he glories much in it) hath nothing ſound from head to foot; how can they expect this argument ſhould prevaile with us, when it is rejected by themſelves, who deny the conſequence from the Infallibility of the Church unto that of Councels. So doth *Cameracenſis* (as S. *Clara* notes) in theſe words: *A general Councel may erre in the faith, becauſe if it ſhould erre, yet it would remaine that others without the Councel did not erre, and by conſequence that the faith of the Church did not faile* (b). The like ſaith *Panormitanus*: *A Councel may erre, as it hath erred; nor doth this hinder it, that Chriſt prayed for his Church that it might not erre, becauſe, although a general Councel repreſent the whole Church, yet in truth it is not the whole Church: —All the faithful do conſtitute that Church, whoſe head and huſband Chriſt is, and that is the Church which cannot erre* (c). The very ſame thing, and almoſt in the ſame words ſaith *Antonius* (d), where he adds an inſtance, *That the ſaying of Jerome was preferred before the decree of a Councel.* Thus you ſee the conſequence is de-

(a) *Nec arbitreris ideò nobis non poſſe ſubrepere injuſtam commotionem, quia Epiſcopi ſumus, ſed potiùs cogitemus inter laqueos tentationum nos periculoſiſſimè vivere, quia homines ſumus.* Epiſtola 75.

(b) *Concilium generale poteſt contra fidem errare, quia ipſo ſic errante adhuc ſtaret aliquos extra Concilium non errare, & per conſequens fidem Eccleſiæ non deficere.* art. 3. in quæſtione veſperiarum. aſſert. 8.

(c) *Concilium non poteſt errare, quia Chriſtus oravit pro Eccleſia ſua ut non deficeret: Quia dico, quòd licèt Concilium generale repreſentet totam Eccleſiam univerſalem, cujus caput & ſponſus eſt ipſe Chriſtus, & iſta eſt illa Eccleſia quæ errare non poteſt.* Super part. 1. Decret. fol. 142.

(d) in his ſummâ part. 3. tit. 22. c. 2. de Conciliis generalibus. §. 6.

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nied by three famous Authors of their own? Nay, what ſay you, if S. *Clara* himſelf deny the Conſequence: I am greatly miſtaken, if it doth not follow from hence, that he makes Councels infallible no further then they are afterwards received and owned by the Church, and allowes them to be fallible where that reception doth not follow, as we ſhall ſee hereafter; and therefore the Infallibility is fixed in the Catholick Church, not in the Councel, and conſequently the Church may be infallible, and yet the Councel remain fallible: as thoſe Papiſts that aſſert Councels to have their Infallibility from the Pope, (which *Bellarmine* and the Jeſuites generally do) confeſs Councels without the Popes confirmation, and in themſelves to be but fallible: for what the Pope's confirmation is in *Bellarmine*'s opinion, that the Churches reception is in the judgment of S. *Clara*, and all the Authors he cites to that purpoſe. What ſay you further, if S. *Clara* confeſs the falſehood of his own Concluſion? let the intelligent Reader judg. His Concluſion is, Therefore Councels are infallible in the judgment of the Fathers; and of all the Fathers he tels us S. *Auſtin* is the greateſt Aſſertor of the Infallibility of Councels: now I aſſume, St. *Auſtin* in the judgent of S. *Clara* held, that Councels are fallible. This I prove from his own words: *In this ſenſe Occham rightly delivers the mind of Auſtin: whether they be Popes or others, whether they wrot any thing in Councel, or out of Councel, the ſame judgment is to be paſſed upon them, that things are not therefore to be reputed infallibly true & certain becauſe they wrot ſo, but onely becauſe they could prove it by Scripture, or reaſon, or miracles, or the approbation of the univerſal Church.* Thus far *Occham*. Now follows S. *Clara*'s ἐπίκρισις: *Which doctrine of his I judg moſt ſafe, and that it is owned by almoſt all Catholicks.* (a)

(a) *Denique in hoc ſenſu bene dicit Occhamus de mente Auguſtini,*

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The evidence of this place forced S. *Clara* to make this acknowledgment, that it ſeems to favour the opinion of thoſe who aſſerted the Fallibility of Councels in leſſer things, (though indeed this is but a figment of his own brain, and a diſtinction foiſted into the text, which St. *Auſtin* never dream'd of) and he is reduced to ſuch ſtraits, that he hath no other way to evade, but in ſtead of an Anſwer to oppoſe one argument againſt another; viz. that it is ſufficient for him, that the Fathers call thoſe Hereticks that do not adhere to the definitions of Councels, *Ergo* they thought them Infallible(*a*): It is *Bellarmine*'s argument, and I have already anſwer'd it. And ſo this block being removed, the Concluſion remains firme, That St. *Auſtin* thought not Councels infallible. For farther confirmation whereof, I ſhall from hence collect two Arguments, plainly proving, that St. *Auſtin* was not of the judgment of the Romaniſts in this point of the Infallibility of Councels.

1. Becauſe no more Infallibility is here granted to general Councels then to particular Synods, nay then to private Doctors. This I prove, becauſe St. *Auſtin*, and the Papiſts themſelves, and indeed all men allow each of them ſo far infallible, and their aſſertions to be infallibly true, as they can prove them by Scripture, or irrefragable reaſons, or miracles, or the approbation of the whole Church: and not one ſyllable more doth *Auſtin* give to general Councels.

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quam ibi refert 3. Dialog. tract. 1. lib. 3. c. 24. Sive fuerint ſummi Pontifices, ſive alii, ſive ſcripſerint aliquid in Concilio generali, ſive extra, conſimile de iis judicium eſt habendum, ut in his quæ ſcientiæ vel juris ſunt, non ideo aliquid putetur certitudinaliter modo prædicto (ſcil. infallibili) eſſe verum, quia ipſi ita ſcripſerunt, niſi id vel per Scripturam divinam, vel rationes irrefragabiles, aut operationem miraculorum, aut per approbationem univerſalis Eccleſiæ perſuadere voluerint: Sic Occham: *Quam eius ſententiam tutiſſimam æſtimo, & ab omnibus ferè Catholicis amplexam. Syſtem. fidei c. 16. num. 2.* (a) *Ibid.* 2.

2. Becauſe the Papiſts will not, and cannot according to their principles truly ſpeak what St. *Auſtin* there ſpeaks, and therefore St. *Auſtin* did not think as they think (unleſſe they will make him one of thoſe, who ſeldome ſpeak as they think) It is the known and avowed Doctrine of the Romiſh Church, (however diſowned by ſome few of them, whom they look on as Extravagants and Schiſmaticks,) that we are bound to believe the Doctrine of the Pope, ſay ſome, of the Councel, ſay others, of the Pope and Councel together, ſay almoſt all, upon the credit of their own aſſertion, without any further reaſon. This is evident from *Stapleton* (a), *Gregory de Valentia* (b), *Tannerus* (c), and *Bellarmine* in ſeveral places, one I ſhall inſtance in. *It is one thing* (ſaith he) *to interpret a law as a Doctor, (that requires Learning;) another thing to interpret it as a Judge, (that requires Authority:) a Doctor propounds not his opinion as neceſſary to to be followed, farther then reaſon induceth us; but a Judg propounds his opinion with a neceſſity of following it. The Fathers expound Scripture as Doctors or Lawyers, but the Pope and Councels as Judges or Princes* (d). And now let S. *Clara* himſelf judg, if he will deal candidly, whether St. *Auſtin* and *Bellarmine* were of a mind, or (which is all one) whether St. *Auſtin* did receive the Decrees of Councels as of Judges and Princes, barely upou the credit of their authority or aſſertion, as the Papiſts ſay he did, or only

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(a) *Contra Whitak. in variis locis.* (b) *lib. 8. Anal. fid.* (c) *In colloquio Ratiſbonenſi. ſeſ. 9.* (d) *Aliud eſt interpretari legem more Doctoris, aliud more Judicis: ad explicationem more Doctoris requiritur eruditio, ad explicationem more Judicis requiritur authoritas. Doctor enim non proponit ſuam ſententiam ut neceſſariò ſequendam, ſed ſolùm quatenus ratio ſuadet; at Judex proponit ut ſequendam neceſſariò.* —*Auguſtinus, & cæteri Patres in commentariis fungebantur officio Doctorum, at Concilia & Pontifices funguntur officio Judicis. De verbi Dei interpretatione, lib. 3, cap. 10, verſus finem.*

as Doctors, becauſe they could prove what they ſay from Scripture or reaſon, as St. Auſtin *in terminis* aſſerts?

§ 11. But becauſe it is of ſome concernment to underſtand Auſtin's mind in this point, (whoſe authority is ſo venerable both to them and us, and whom both Parties willingly admit for Umpire in this controverſy, (I ſhall further conſider what S. *Clara* alledgeth from him for this purpoſe: the paſſage he pleads is this; *Untill that which was wholſomely believed, was confirmed, and all doubts removed by a general Councel* (a): *Therefore*, ſaith S. *Clara*, *it is not lawful to doubt after the definitions of Councels* (b). Put it it into a Syllogiſm, and it is this. That which ſo confirms a truth, as to remove all doubts, is Infallible: But a general Councel ſo confirmes a truth, as to remove all doubts: *Ergo.* The Major is denied: for a private Miniſter may by the evidence of Scripture or reaſon ſo confirme a truth, as to remove all doubt from the hearers, and yet is not therefore infallible. There are then two wayes, whereby doubts may be removed. 1. By the infallibility of the authority: Thus when God tells me that which ſeems improbable to reaſon, this ſhould remove all doubt. 2. By the evidence of arguments: and ſo their argument proceeds *à genere ad ſpeciem affirmativè*, thus a general Councel removeth doubts, *Ergo* they do it by the Infallibility of their Authority; it followeth not, for you ſee they may do it by the evidence of their argument. And this Anſwer might very well ſuffice: But that I may give them full ſatisfaction (if poſſibly the intereſt of theſe men would ſuffer their conſciences to open their eyes) I ſhall prove that it was ſo, and that St. *Auſtin* ſpeaks of this latter way of removing doubts, i. e. by their con-

(a) *Donec plenario totius orbis Concilio quod ſaluberrimè ſentiebatur, etiam remotis dubitationibus firmaretur. lib. 1. con. Donatiſtas. c. 7.*

(b) *Non licèt igitur dubitare poſt definitiones Conciliares.*

vincing

vincing arguments, not by their infallible authority. This plainly appears by conſidering the contexture of the words: *Leſt I ſhould ſeem*, ſaith he, *only to prove it by humane arguments, becauſe the obſcurity of this queſtion did in former times, before the ſchiſme of Donatus, make great and worthy Biſhops and Provincial Councels differ among themſelves, untill by a General Councel, that which was wholſomely believed was confirmed, and all doubts removed, I ſhall bring out of the Goſpel infallible arguments*(a). Where you plainly ſee, that he cals the authority of Councels but a Humane argument and authority, and that he acknowledgeth none but Scripture-arguments to be *certa*, certain or infallible, as is evident from the Antitheſis. 2. This appears moſt undeniably from a parallel place, where St. Auſtin ſpeaks thus of *Cyprian: That holie man ſufficiently ſhewed, that he would have changed his opinion, if any had demonſtrated to him that Baptiſme might be ſo given* &c. (*b*) And a little after, he would have yielded to a general Councel, *if the truth of that queſtion had in his time been evidenced, and declared, and confirmed by a general Councel* (*c*). And he gives the reaſon of his yielding, *Becauſe that holy Soul would have yielded even to one man declaring and demonſtrating the truth* (d), —*much more to*

(a) *Jam enim ne videar humanis argumentis id agere, quoniam quæſtionis hujus obſcuritas prioribus Eccleſiæ temporibus ante ſchiſma Donati* ——*patres Epiſcopos ita inter ſe compulit ſalvâ pace diſceptare ac fluctuare, ut diu Conciliorum in ſuis quibuſque regionibus diverſa ſtatuta nutaverint, donec plenario totius orbis Concilio, quod ſalubertimè ſentiebatur, etiam remotis dubitationibus firmaretur, ex Evangelio proſero certa documenta. lib. 1. con. Donatum. c. 7.*

(b) *Satis oſtendit ſe facillimè correcturum fuiſſe ſententiam ſuam, ſi quis demonſtraret baptiſmum Chriſti ſic dari poſſe.* Et paulò poſt. (c) *Si jam illo tempore quæſtionis hujus veritas eliquata & declarata per plenarium Concilium ſolidaretur:* & poſtea; (d) *quia profectò & uni verum dicenti et demonſtranti poſſet facillimè conſentire tam ſancta anima: lib. 2. con. Don. c. 3.*

a general Councel: In all which it is plain, that it was not any presumed Infallibility of the Councel, but the clearness of the truth, and the strength of their arguments which would have satisfied *Cyprian* in St. *Austin's* judgment. 3. This may be irrefragably proved from hence, that St. *Austin* makes this the peculiar property of the holy Scripture (by which it is distinguished from, and advanced above all the opinions, decrees, or writings of all Bishops in or out of Councels) that we may not doubt of any thing contained in it. The words are express, and brought in with a *Quis nesciat: Who knowes not that the holy Scripture is so preferred before all the letters of after-Bishops, that we may not so much as doubt or debate concerning any thing contained in them, whether it be true or no. But the letters of the Bishops may be reproved by Councels, if they swerve from the truth: and Provincial Councels must yeild to General Councels, and former general Councels are oft-corrected by the latter* (a): where there is a gradation from Bishops to Provincial, and thence to General Councels, but all of them are in this respect postposed to the Scripture, that we may lawfully doubt of any thing contained in their Decrees, and where they swerve from the truth, reject it. And nothing more evinceth the strength of this argument, then the sillines of our Adversaries evasions: *He speaks of questions of Fact and Ceremony, not of Faith,* saith *Bellarmine* and *Stapleton*, whereas the question there disputed was, whether persons Baptized by

(a) *Quis nesciat sanctam Scripturam — omnibus posteriorum Episcoporum literis ita præponi, ut de illa omnino dubitari aut disceptari non possit, utrum verum vel certum sit, quicquid in ea scriptum esse constiterit. Episcoporum autem literas — per Concilia licere reprehendi, si quid in iis forte à veritate deviatum est: & Concilia — per Provincias plenariorum Conciliorum authoritati cedere, & ipsa plenaria sæpe priora posterioribus emendari. lib. 2. contra Donatistas c. 3.*

Hereticks should be rebaptized, which the Fathers formerly made and the Papists now make a question of Faith. *But by* emendantur (saith *Stapleton*) *he means* perfectiùs explicantur: If you ask in what Dictionary or Author the word *emendantur* is so taken, you must understand that it follows *à majori ad minus:* that if our Romish Masters may coyn new Articles of Faith, which diverse Papists professe they may, much more may they devise new significations of words. But I would know of these Doctors, what they would think, or at least what discreet and sober men would think of that Author that should say, *Libri Mosis à Prophetis emendantur*, or *Scripta Prophetarum ab Apostolis emendantur:* and yet if *Stapletons* Lexicon may be used, it were an harmlesse expression. But if these men will give St. *Austin* leave to be the interpreter of his own words, he hath sufficiently open'd his mind, by making *emendare* and *reprehendere* parallel expressions, and by speaking of such an Emendation as follows after, or is conjoyned with a doubting of the truth of what was delivered by the Councel. This may serve for the third Proposition.

§ 12. And here I might give my self a *supersedeas*, having shewed the imbecillity of their principal Proofs from the Fathers; but *ex abundanti* I shall adde the fourth Proposition, which is this; That it doth appear, the Antients did believe the fallibility of Councels. The former proposition shewed, that they could not prove their Assertion, and this I hope will disprove it. But because what hath been already said may serve for that end also, I shall be the briefer in this, and shall only mention three arguments to prove it.

1. They who make Scripture-proof necessary to command the belief of doctrines or matters of Religion, do not hold the Infallibity of Councels; But so did the Fathers: *Ergo.* The Major is evident from hence: because

cauſe one infallible Authority is ſufficient, and the addition of another, though it may tend *ad melius eſſe*, yet it cannot be neceſſary *ad eſſe*, (for then the former were not ſufficient.) And the Papiſts who believe the Infallibility of Popes or Councels, do profeſſe *eo nomine* that Scripture-proof is not neceſſary, and that the Churches authority without Scripture evidence is ſufficient. When *Whitaker* urged the neceſſity of Scripture-proof to ſhew the Church for proof of the Scriptures prerogative above the Church, *Stapleton* roundly anſwers, *That ſuch proof is not neceſſary to a Chriſtian man, and a Believer* (a). For the Minor, That the Fathers did judge Scripture-proof neceſſary, hath been already ſhew'd, and will hereafter be made good; and to prevent tedious repetitions I ſhall now forbear it.

2. They who allow the people liberty of examination of all that any men, ſince the Apoſtles, ſay, do not believe the Infallibility of Councels: but ſo do the Fathers. The major is evident from the confeſſion and practice of our Adverſaries, who believing the Infallibility of the Pope or Councels, do injoyn the reception of their Decrees and Injunctions without examination. *A Chriſtian ought to receive the Churches doctrine without examination*, ſaith *Bellarmine* (b). The Minor hath been proved from the expreſſe words of the Fathers.

3. They that derogate Faith from all men without exception, beſide the Apoſtles, do not hold the Infallibility of Councels: But ſo do the Fathers, *Ergo*. The Major needs no proof: for the Councels are made up of men, and ſuch too as are confeſſed to be each of them

(a) *Homini Chriſtiano & Catholico——huiuſmodi probatio neceſſaria non eſt.* De Authoritate Scripturæ lib. 3. cap. 1. in fine.

(b) *Debet Chriſtianus ſine examine recipere doctrinam Eccleſiæ.* Bel. ubi ſupra.

fallible. Nor do they pretend to any Enthusiasme, or immediate revelation. The Minor also hath been fully proved: to which I shall adde one out of *Austins*. *If it be confirmed by authority of Scripture, we are to believe it without all doubting: but for other witnesses, or their testimonies, a man may believe, or not believe, as he apprehends what they say hath weight or not* (a). It is true, S. *Clara* sayes, that *St. Austin doth only prefer Scripture before particular authors* (b): which, how false it is, sufficiently appears from the other testimony of *Austins*, which I have even now discussed, wherein you plainly saw in *Occam's* and St. *Clara's* own judgment, St. *Austin* positively took away all difference between Councels and private Doctors in this particular, and equally denied all *infallibility* to both of them. Thus I hope I have sufficiently proved what I undertook concerning the supposed Tradition and the testimony of the Fathers, in reference to the Infallibility of Councels. This is the first Branch, The Infallibility of Councels is not made known to us by Tradition: the next Proposition must shew, That it is not revealed in Scripture.

§ 13. This therefore is the second branch, That the Infallibility of Councels hath no foundation in Scripture.

1. I might justly insist upon what hath been already mentioned concerning the doctrine of the Romanists about the insignificancy and insufficiency by the Scrip-

(a) *Si Divinarum Scripturarum —— perspicua firmetur authoritate, sine ulla dubitatione credendum est. Aliis verò testibus vel testimoniis, quibus aliquid credendum esse suadetur, tibi credere vel non credere liceat, quantum ea momenti ad faciendam fidem habere vel non habere perpenderis.* Epist. 112.

(b) *Dico Augustinum hic solùm præferre Scripturas particularibus authoribus.* System. fid. ubi supra.

ture to ground my faith without the Churches authority. And surely they that professe they are not bound to believe the Divinity of Christ, were it not for the testimony and interpretation of the Church, i.e. the Pope, or a Councel, (which is their assertion) must needs give us the same liberty to assert, that a Christian is not bound to believe what the Scripture saith concerning the Infallibility of the Pope or Councels, but for the testimony of the Pope and Councels: that is, we have no reason to believe their Infallibility, but this, that they tell us they are infallible, we have their word for it; so it seems the Disciple is better then his Master, and the Pope's word will go further then the word of God: for the Scriptures Testimony is not to be credited in its own cause saith *Bellarmine* (a), as the Churches Testimony is. When the Papists would presse the Scripture to the service of this notion, it may say to them as *Jephthah* did to the Elders of Israel, *Jud.* 11.7. *Did not ye hate me, and expell me out of my father's house, and why are you come unto me now, when ye are in distress?* And upon condition they will reply with the Gileadites, *Therefore we turn again to thee now that thou mayest be our head.* I will overlook that otherwise unpardonable fault, by (which they have rendred the Scripture unserviceable to their purpose) and once more they shall have a fair tryal, whether the Infallibility of Councels can be demonstrated from Scripture.

Sect. 14. The first and principall support of Infallibility is 1 *Tim.* 3. 15: where the Church is called *the pillar and ground of Truth.* This is their *Ajacis clypeus*, which you shall find used upon all occasions, and infi-

(a): *Etiamsi Scriptura dicat libros Prophetarum & Apostolorum esse divinos, tamen non credam esse, nisi prius id credidero Scripturam, quæ hoc dicit esse divinam. Nam in Alcorano Mahumetis passim legimus ipsum Alcoranum de cœlo & Deo missum.*

nitely repeated by every impertinent scribler of the Romish party.

For Answer, to passe over that notion of our acute, *Chillingworth*, that it is not the Church, but *Timothy* who is there called the ground and pillar of Truth, and so there is onely an Elipsis of the word ὡς which is very frequent στῦλος for ὡς στῦλος, or of the word ὤν στῦλος for στῦλος ὤν, as the learned *Gataker* observes, and there are diverse instances of either of them. So the sence is *that thou mightest behave thy selfe in the House of God, the Church as a Pillar or as* becomes a Pillar. And he gives this notable reason for it, because it was heterogeneous to call that Church a pillar which in the same verse he had called an house. And this I am sure would puzle our masters to answer: But to wave that, I answer.

1 The Church spoken of is not the Church of Rome, but the Church in which *Timothy* was placed. And whether it be spoken of the Church in generall or in particular, what is this to Rome? Here wee find a notable piece of the Romane mystery of iniquity: If there be any reproofes, or censures applied to any other Churches, there every Church must bear its own burden: But if any Church be honoured in Scripture with commendations, promises, priviledges that presently belongs to Rome, and they have a commission to seize it for their own use: but how unjustly we shall here discover, for if you understand these words of the Catholick Church, or of the Church in generall, then the words only prove the indefectibility of the whole Church, which may consist with the errour and Apostacy of several which then were eminent Churches whereof we have unquestionable Instances in the glorious Churches of *Asia*, which notwithstanding this promise fell away: and consequently *Rome*, though then her faith was famous throughout the World, might fall with them or after them

them. And if you underſtand the words of a particular Church they muſt be underſtood of that Church in which *Timothy* was placed: And if my memory faile me not exceedingly, that was not *Rome*, but *Epheſus*, which notwithſtanding this Caracter did fall away: And moreover it was not the Church ruling, but the Church ruled in, and over which *Timothy*, was ſet, which is here called the pillar and ground of truth. And ſo the Argument runs thus: The Church and people of *Epheſus* are the pillar and ground of truth. Therefore the Pope of *Rome* is infallible. The Conſequence is thus proved, the Pope may interpret Scripture as he pleaſeth, and though he may erre in the premiſes, as *Stapleton* confeſſeth (*a*) yet he is alwayes infallible in the concluſion as the ſame *Stapleton* aſſerts: *Ergo* the Popes infallibility is out of the reach of all Arguments.

2 The terme of Pillar notes the ſolidity, but not the infallibility of the Church, it notes the difficulty of its removall, but not the impoſſibility. Every ſtout Champion of Gods Truth is a pillar of the truth, and ſuch are frequently called by that name in the fathers, but yet they are not infallible. *Athanaſius* was a pillar of the truth, but not infallible: The great *Oſius* a pillar of the truth, and *Nicene* faith, yet fell fowly, as appears by the ſtory. *Muſonius* Biſhop of *Neocæſarea* is by *Baſilius Cæſarienſis* inveſted this very title of στῦλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας. (*b*) *Ergo* by the Romane Logick *Baſil*, thought him infallible, or if he did not then *Baſil* did not think thoſe words implyed infallibility, *Gregory Nyſſen* tells us, *not onely Peter, and James, and John are pillars, not only John Baptiſt is a light, but alſo all that build up the Church are pillars and lights* (*c*) Therefore it ſeemes all Miniſters are

(a) *In relectione principiorum fidei. controv.* 4. *qu.* 2.
(b) *In Epiſ.* 63. (c) *in vita Moſis.*

 infallible:

infallible: Male-Children are called σύλοι οἴκων, the pillars of their families, among the Greek Poets; and *Geta*, a faithfull ſervant in *Terence*, is called *Columen Familiæ*, the pillar of the family: For ought I know, if thoſe men would go to *Rome*, and upon the credit of this word ſue out a Writ of priviledge, they might be as infallible as the Pope himſelfe.

3. This Phraſe, The Church *is* the Pillar of Truth, may note the Churches duty, not her practice, and what ſhe ought to be, not what ſhe alwaies is. They ſhall not ſay this is *gratis dictum*, I will make it good by parallel Inſtances, wherein they ſhall ſee the abſurdity of their argument. *Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evill.* Rom. 13. 3. If this argument be good, The Church is a Pillar, E. ſhe cannot erre, then this alſo is good, That Rulers cannot be a terror to good works. None but one that comes from Bedlam would aſſert the latter, and none but one that comes from *Rome* would conclude the former. Thus our Saviour ſaith of his Miniſters, *Ye are the ſalt of the world, ye are the light of the world*, Matth. 5. Ergo by this argument, this Salt could not looſe its ſavour, and no Miniſter can be in the dark, but every one muſt be infallible. Thus *Prov.* 16 10. *A Divine ſentence is in the lips of the King, his mouth tranſgreſſeth not in judgment*: Ergo Kings are infallible. If the Pope had ſuch a Text in the New Teſtament, *The Pope's mouth tranſgreſſeth not in judgment*, you may eaſily imagine what triumphs the Aſſertors of Infallibility would have made, who can build a towring confidence upon ſuch pittiful foundations: and yet this doth not informe us of the practice of Kings, but acquaints them with their duty, as Interpreters agree.

4. This Phraſe, The pillar and ground of Truth, notes the neceſſity of the Churches miniſtry (*quoad nos*) but not the infallibility of her Authority: thoſe are two diſtinct things, and the one no way conſequent upon the other.

The

The utmoſt which can be ſqueezed from that phraſe is this, that the Church doth ſupport the truth and Goſpel of Chriſt in the world, and ſo doth every ſincere zealous defender of the truth, and eſpecially the Miniſters, and prime champions of the truth, not only when met together in a general Councel, but alſo in their ſingle capacities, which I think will be undeniably proved by this argument. The Church was *the pillar and ground of truth* for the firſt three hundred years after Chriſt and the Apoſtles, never did it more deſerve that name, nor did it ever more diſcharge that office, but all that time there was no œcumenical Councel (and that is the only Councel to whom Infallibility is aſcribed by the Papiſts) therefore either that phraſe doth not evince infallibility, or the ſeveral paſtors of thoſe ages were infallible.

5. The conſequence of the argument is falſe and frivolous; The Church is the pillar of truth, Ergo ſhe is infallible: for the ſame Church may be a pillar of truth and a ſeat of Error. For what is it to be a Pillar of the Truth, (if we draw aſide the curtain of the Metaphor) but to be a Defender of the Faith? And who knows not that the ſame perſons may defend the truth, and maintain errors with them, unleſſe he be one that never read the Bible, nor Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory? Who knows not that the ſame perſons, which defended the truth of Chriſtianity againſt Jewes and Pagans, did alſo maintain the Doctrine of *Jeſabel*, and the Herely of the *Nicolaitans? Rev.* 2. and that thoſe very men that owned the foundation, did build the hay and ſtubble of falſe doctrines thereupon, 1 *Cor.* 3. and that diverſe of the ſtouteſt defenders of the truth of the Goſpel among the Fathers had their errors, as *Bellarmine* acknowledgeth? Elſe, if they will ſtand to the conſequence, it will follow by vertue of it, Such a Miniſter preacheth the truth, Ergo he is infallible, and cannot preach falſe doctrine. Such a Judg is the Pillar of Juſtice

Justice in the land, Ergo it is impossible he should make an unjust Decree: Proclamations are hanged upon such a pillar, Ergo a Libell cannot be fastned there.

6. Their argument proceeds from a declaration of the Churches present state, (for that is all that place asserts, viz. that the Church then was a Church and Pillar of truth) to an assurance of its perpetual continuance in that state, (which is quite another thing:) Which kind of argumentation, if it might pass for currant, it would work brave exploits; for then it would follow, The city of Sion was an habitation of righteousnesse, a pillar of truth and justice, Ergo the Prophet *Isay* was mis-informed, when he said, *The faithfull City is become a Harlot, it was full of judgment, righteousnes lodged in it, but now murderers*, Isa: 1. 21. Nay then the Church of England is orthodox in the Romane sence: *Probatur:* It was the Pillar of truth, viz. when it was the Pope's Asse, Ergo it is so still, and the Papists slander us, when they say, we are fallen away. The Church was a Virgin in the Apostles dayes, saith *Egesippus*, Ergo she is not now corrupted, nor indeed can be: for I must tell you, the Pope can do more then all the Apostles either pretended or did; for they could not even while they lived wholly keep the Church from actual corruption, but the Pope keeps her from all possibility of corruption. Thus the Pope is omnipotent, and it is no marvell he is infallible.

§ 15. The Second place of principal moment alledged for the Infallibility of the Church and Councels is *Mat.* 18. 17. where all are commanded to *hear the Church, and they that hear her not, are to be accounted as Heathens and Publicans*, Ergo the Church of *Rome* is Infallible: for this is the comfort, whatever is in the premises, *Romes* infallibility is in the conclusion; and the Church of *Rome*, that can dispence with Gods laws,

lawes (a) may well dispense with Syllogistical rules, by which there ought not to be *more in the conclusion then in the premises*, but that Law was made for Subjects, but not for our Sovereign Lord the Pope. To this may be added another place they vehemently urge, *Luk.* 10.16. *He that heareth you, heareth me*, Ergo the Church is infallible.

Ans. 1. Whatever these texts prove, what right hath the Church of *Rome* to her monopoly of the priviledges here conveyed? Or why may not the Greek or English Churches and their Ministers claime the benefit of them? The words have an indifferent aspect to all of them.

2. The consequence is false, Christians must hear the Church and Ministers, Ergo they are infallible: which I thus prove. Children must obey their Parents, and if they do not, they must dye for it, *Deut.* 21. are parents therefore infallible? Subjects must obey their Magistrates, or dye for it, *Jos.* 1.18. *Whosoever will not hearken unto thy words, he shall be put to death*: it seems then Magistrates are infallible. For this is the argument by which the Romanists pretend to prove the Infallibility of the High-priest of the Jewes, because they that would not hear him, were to be put to death, *Deut.* 17. Nay this very text *Luc.* 10. destroyes that sense which the Romanists would fasten upon it: for seeing it is not the Apostles, but seventy disciples, and they too not as met in a Councel, but as preaching the Gospel severally, or (at most) by pairs, whom they are under such dreadful penalties commanded to hear, if it be conclusive for infallibility, it proves the infallibility of every Minister, or at least of every pair of them.

(a) *Secundùm plenitudinem potestatis de jure supra jus possumus dispensare* ait Innocent. 3. in Decret. de concess. Præbend. tit. 8. c. propo. suit. & addit Glossator, *Nam contra Apostolum dispensat: item contra vetus testamentum.*

3. It

3. It is agreed between them and us, that Chriſt ſpeaks of the Cenſures of the Church *Mat.* 18. and therefore ſurely, if it prove the Churches Infallibility, in any thing, it muſt be in the matter there ſpoken of *viz.* in Church-cenſures: But they grant the Church is Fallible in her cenſures, as depending upon Teſtimony and matters of fact: And therefore it is ridiculous to infer from thence her Infallibility in other things which are not ſpoken of in this place.

4. The Church and Miniſters are to be heard, not ſimply and in all things, but onely in the Lord, and what they ſpeak, according to his word: This is denied by the Papiſts who poſitively aſſert, that they are to be heard in all things, and without examination, as we have ſeen from their own words: It is therefore neceſſary to ſay ſomething to overthrow this lawleſſe liberty and boundleſſe authority aſcribed by them to the Church, for this is their πρῶτον ψεῦδος, or one of their radicall miſtakes.

1. That which Chriſt denies to the Apoſtles is not to be aſcribed to the Church: but Chriſt denies this abſolute Authority to the Apoſtles *Matt.* 23. 10. *Be ye not called maſters, for one is your Maſter even Chriſt*, where it is not the name, but thing which is prohibited, even *magiſterium fidei*, or the uſurpation of an abſolute authority in teachers, and the exaction of an univerſall beliefe and blinde obedience in hearers, which was the errour of the Phariſees here condemned by our Saviour, for ſo they ſaid: *You are to believe all the ſayings of our Rabbines in their Homilies no leſſe then the Law of Moſes.* And again, *All their words are the very words of God* are their expreſſions in the Thalmud. It cannot be denied that Chriſt derogates that authority from the Apoſtles, which he aſcribes to himſelf; but if the Popiſh opinion were true, the Apoſtles had as great authority as Chriſt himſelfe;

for

for the height of Christs authority is expressed in these words (nor can more be said of God himself) *him shall ye hear in all things* Act. 3. 22. This indeed the Popish Doctors most blasphemously arrogate to themselves (as you have seen) but so did not the Apostles: they had not so learned Christ; they allwaies observed their Distance: *Be followers of me as we are of Christ. I have received of the Lord that which I delivered.* St *Paul* denies that he had dominion over their Faith, 2 *Cor.* 1. 24. *Not that we have dominion over your Faith.* I'le warrant you *Paul* denied it to himselfe, because it was *Peters* Prerogative; for it is certaine St *Peters* Successors challenge it, for Dominion and Subjection are Relatives. And if the people owe an absolute subjection of their Faith to their teachers, the Teachers have an absolute dominion over the Faith of the people: In short: This sottish Doctrine of an implisit Faith must needs be Apocryphal, so long as the Epistle to the Galatians is Canonicall, and especially *Gal.* 1. 8. *Though we or an Angel from Heaven Preach any other Gospell, let him be accursed:* And he is not *contented with a single assertion, but addes as we said before, so say I now again, let him be accursed:* Which if the Reader compare with that abominable passage of *Bellarmines*, *If the Pope should erre in commanding Vices and forbidding Vertues, the Church were bound to believe vices to be good, and vertues to be evill* (a) : He will be able to judge whether the Faith of the present Romish Church be the same with that of the Apostles dayes, or not: and whether they who are so liberall in dispensing their Anathema's to all that differ from their sentiments do not justly fall under the Anathema here denounced.

(a) Si *Papa erraret præcipiendo vitia & prohibendo virtutes, teneretur Ecclesia credere vitia esse bona & virtutes malas. De Romano Pontifice lib. 4. cap. 5. in fine.*

2. If

2. If Pastours are to be heard in all things, then people cannot sin in obeying their Pastours, (else they should sin in doing their duty) but people may sin in obeying their Pastours: Methinks this should need no proofe, but I finde this to be the temper of our Adversaries, they who give the hardest measure to us, expect the highest measure from us, and they of whom we may say (as *Galen* did of *Moses*) *multa dicunt, nihil probant*, they say much, and prove nothing, will yield us nothing, but what we must win by dint of Argument.

Therefore I shall prove it briefly: The Jewes sinned in following *Aarons* Doctrine: *These be thy Gods O Israel*: So the Prophet *Jeremy* frequently condemnes them for obeying the decrees of their Priests in his time: And our Saviour hath put this out of doubt, speaking of the Jewish Teachers, *Matt.* 15. *If the blind lead the blind both will fall into the Ditch*: And St *Peter* assures us (if his Successors will please to give him credit) that the Jewes were guilty of a great sinne in Christs death, though they did it in obedience to the decrees of their Rulers, *Acts* 3.14.17.

3. If people are allowed to examine the Doctrines of their Teachers by the word ere they receive them, then they are not to be heard in all things; But people are allowed so to examine — All the doubt lies about the Minor; and yet who can doubt of that, who ever read these following places. *Take heed that no man deceive you, for many shall come in my name*, Math. 24. 4, 5. *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good*, 1 Thes. 5.21. *Prove the Spirits*, 1 Joh. 4. 1. It is true *Bellarmine* saith, *These precepts belong onely to Learned men* (a): And *Gretserus*

(a) *Prædicta mandata non ad omnes, sed ad solos Doctores pertinent de verbi Dei interpretatione*, lib. 3. cap. 10.

gives

gives this reaſon for it, *becauſe the unlearned people are not able to examine* (a); very good: it ſeemes then, none but the Learned can *have their ſences exerciſed to diſcerne between good and evill*, Heb. 5. 14. And it is the priviledge of ſhephards onely which Chriſt made the Character of all his ſheep; *That they knew his voice, and could diſtinguiſh it from the voice of Strangers*, Joh. 10. 4, 5. It ſeems Chriſt ſpoke to the learned only, when he ſaid, *Search the Scriptures*, *Joh.* 5. 39. It ſeems the learned *Theſſalonians* only were bound to hold faſt that which is good, for that goes with their proving, and provingwas in order to holding faſt. It ſeems the *Bereans* (whom *Paul* commends for examining his doctrine by the Scriptures, Act. 17.) were Maſters of Arts, and *Berea* was an Univerſity, and εὐγενεῖς implies that they had Academical education; and the Apoſtle meant it only of the Univerſity, when he writ to the city of *Corinth*, *I ſpeak as to wiſe men, judg ye what I ſay*, 1 Cor. 10. 15. Nay, the miſchief is, if this be granted, their work is not done: for if the learned may examine, that is ſufficient for our purpoſe for ſuch are many Lay-men, (as they are called) and diverſe of the Clergy, who have no ſhare in the Churches government, and therefore are as much bound to ſubjection as any of the people: and conſequently the Rulers are not ſimply to be obeyed, nor their doctrine blindly received upon their own credit. But (ſaith *Bellarmine*) *Indeed doubtful doctrines are to be examined, but the doctrine of lawful Miniſters is not doubtful, but openly good* (b). I ſee the Cardinal intended to ſhew his wiſdome, reſerving the

(a) *Cum peritia probandi omnes ſpiritus ſuperat vulgi captum, præceptum hoc plebeiis minimè dictum eſt.* Gretſerus *in Defenſ.*

(b) *Agitur de Doctrinâ dubiâ, nam illa ſola indiget probatione: Doctrina autem legitimorum præpoſitorum non eſt dubia, ſed apertè bona.* ubi ſupra.

diſ-

diſcovery of his honeſty to another time. *Bellarmine* was reſolved to take a poſt, which he might be ſure to keep, he knew the Hereticks would be nibling about the premiſes, and therefore he leaves the guarding of them to others, and reſolves to hold the concluſion, (which he knew was not good manners to deny.) But if ſuch doctrine as our teachers deliver be *eo nomine* evidently good and true, then theſe commands of trying are both dangerous (ſeeing they ſuppoſe and allow of doubts) and fruſtraneous, (ſince I may ſafely receive them without tryal.)

§ 16. A third place alledged for the Infallibility of the Church and Councels is Joh. 16. 13. *When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.* Hence *Bellarmine* thus argues: *Chriſt ſpeaks not of the Apoſtles only, but of their ſucceſſors, becauſe he ſaith, the comforter ſhall abide with you for ever, ch.* 14. 16. *i. e. with them and their ſucceſſors for ever. But Chriſt doth not lead the Biſhops ſeverally conſidered into all truth, therefore he leads them into truth when they are gathered together: and ſeeing there is no greater chair in the Church, by which God teacheth us, then the Pope, when a Councel is added to him: if his chair ſhould erre, how this promiſe is true, he will teach you all truth, I ſee not* (a). This may be too: *Bernardus non videt omnia*, and why ſhould *Robertus* do it?

(a) *Alter locus eſt Joh.* 16. *Spiritus veritatis docebit vos omnem veritatem. Et ne putemus hoc dici ſolis Apoſtolis & non etiam ſucceſſoribus. Cap.* 14. *apertè.* —*Dominus teſtatur ſpiritum ſanctum manſurum cum Apoſtolis in æternum, i.e. tum eis & cum ſucceſſoribus perpetuò. At Epiſcopos ſeorſim exiſtentes non docet Spiritus ſanctus omnem veritatem, ergo ſaltem Epiſcopos omnes in unum congregatos docebit omnem veritatem: & ſanè cùm non ſit in Eccleſia major aliqua Cathedra, per quam Deus nos doceat, quàm ſummi Pontificis Cathedra, ad junctio conſenſu generalis Concilii, ſi hæc etiam Cathedra falli poteſt cùm univerſam Eccleſiam docet, neſcio quomodo vera ſit illa promiſſio, Docebit vos omnem veritatem. De Concil. authoritate lib.* 2. *c.* 2.

Anſ.

Anſ. 1. Theſe words, if extended beyond the Apoſtles, do not imply any infallibility: or if they do, a man may with as great colour deduce the infallibility nay the omniſciency of all Believers from 1 Joh. 2. 20. *Ye have an unction from the holy one, and ye know all things*: and v. 27. *The ſame anointing teacheth you all things. All truth* in the text is only meant of all truths neceſſary to ſalvation, (nothing being more familiar in Scripture-uſe, then for general expreſſions, as *all men, every creature*, &c. to be underſtood with tacit limitations) nor are all whom God leads into truth, infallibly led into it, unleſs they will make all ſincere Chriſtians infallible; for all ſuch are led by the Spirit into truth, but not all in the ſame manner and degree, as the Apoſtles were. So the Popiſh argument proceeds *à genere ad ſpeciem affirmativè*: They are led into truth, Ergo they are infallibly led.

2. There is nothing in that text Joh. 16. to ſhew the extent of that promiſe to the Apoſtles ſucceſſors, which *Bellarmine* ſufficiently diſcovers, by deſerting this place and fetching in another to his aid Joh. 14. ſo his argument is cunningly patched up of two places. That God would lead them into all truth he proves from Joh. 16. That God will do this for ever he would fain prove from Joh. 14. whereas this place doth not ſay, that *God would lead the Apoſtles into all truth for ever*, but only *that the ſpirit ſhould abide with them for ever*, and that as a comforter, which is quite another thing: if not, let me ſee that Papiſt that will give it under his hand, that every one with whom the Spirit abides as a comforter is infallible. And yet if I ſhould wink at this fraudulent dealing of *Bellarmines*, and admit the phraſe *for ever* into the principal Text, this would not infer a neceſſity of ſtretching this promiſe beyond the Apoſtles; partly becauſe in Scripture-uſe that phraſe doth frequently denote the term of life, as *Exod.* 21. 6. *The ſervant is to be with his maſter for*

ever, and 1 Kings 12.7. —*they will be thy ſervants for ever*; and principally becauſe in ſtricteſt propriety of ſpeech the ſpirit of God did and doth for ever abide in the perſons of the Apoſtles. As God *betroths* every one of his people to him *for ever*, Hoſ. 2.19. and is their portion for ever, Pſal. 73.26. and the water that Chriſt gives to his people (which he himſelf expounds of the Spirit, Joh. 7. 38,39.) is in them for ever. Joh. 4. 14.

3. If this promiſe of *leading into all truth* be underſtood of the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors in the ſame manner, that is ſo as to make them both infallible, then as the Apoſtles ſeverally conſidered were infallible, and not onely when combined in Councels, ſo alſo are their Succeſſors each of them Infallible. (which all Papiſts deny) It is a ſtrange way of arguing which *Bellarmine* uſeth. The Apoſtles ſeverally conſidered were Infallible by vertue of this promiſe: And their Succeſſors are comprehended in this promiſe: And their Succeſſors are not infallible in their ſingle Capacities, (as the Apoſtles were:) *Ergo*, they are infallible when they are gathered together: This is that I told you before, and here you ſee it exemplified, though Fallibility be in the premiſes, yet you ſhall be ſure to meet with Infallibility in the Concluſion.

4. If this promiſe of the Spirit did containe Infallibility, and did extend beyond the Apoſtles, yet certainly it is a moſt unreaſonable thing, not onely to communicate but appropriate this promiſe of the Spirit to ſuch as have not the Spirit: ſuch are all ungodly men *Jude* verſ. 19. —*ſenſuall, not having the Spirit*. Yea, in that very place which the Papiſts urge for the perpetuall reſidence of Gods Spirit in Popes and Biſhops *Joh.* 14. There is a poſitive excluſion of all ungodly men from any ſhare therein *verſ.* 17. *The Spirit of Truth whom the World cannot receive, becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him.* A Character aſcribed by God himſelfe to all wicked men,

1 *Joh.*

1 *Jo.* 3. 6. *Whoſoever ſinneth* (be he Chriſtian, Miniſter, or Pope) *hath not ſeen him, neither known him.* So in this Argument they runne upon a double abſurdity. 1. That they deny the promiſed guidance of the Spirit unto thoſe Elect, Holy and humble Chriſtians who are the onely perſons that in Scripture account *have the Spirit, and are led by the Spirit, and walke after the Spirit.* 2. That they challenge the Infallible guidance of the Spirit to thoſe that have not ſo much as the generall conduct of the Spirit which is common to all true Chriſtians.

5. That you may ſee the deſperateneſſe of the Popiſh cauſe, you may obſerve that *Bellarmine* himſelfe elſewhere denies the Concluſion which in this place he ſtrives to obtrude upon us: For here he inferres the Infallibility of Councels, but elſwhere he laies down this poſition, *That a generall Councell may erre, and is not Infallible, except the Pope confirme them*; that is to ſay, The Councell in it ſelf is Fallible, the Pope onely is Infallible, of which more by and by: And thus according to *Bellarmines* opinion, the Biſhops neither ſeverally nor concunctly are infallible, but in truth. The Pope onely is infallible. And ſo *Bellarmine* hath not onely ſhuffled the Pope into the Text, but indeed juſled out all others, and deſtroyed that infallibility of Councels which he pretended to aſſert; as became the Popes faithfull ſervant to do. And ſo this is *Bellarmines* Argument from theſe words, God hath promiſed Infallibility to lead all the Apoſtles, and all their Succeſſors into all truth: Therefore none of the Apoſtles Succeſſors are Infallible, ſave St *Peters* onely.

§. 17. A fourth place for the Infallibility of Councels is *Acts* 15. 28. *For it ſeemed good unto the Holy Ghoſt, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden then theſe neceſſary things,* whence they thus argue: This Councell had the Infallible direction of the Holy-Ghoſt and

conſequently all other Councels have it.

Anſw. 1. If the Concluſion be univerſally true (which if it be not, it will do the Church of Rome no ſervice) then the *Arrian* Councels were infallible: But if they ſay that onely the Orthodox Councels are Infallible, that alters the queſtion, and the Church of Rome muſt firſt prove her Orthodoxy, and then her Infallibility; and to ſpeak truth, ſhe may prove the one as ſoone as the other.

2. The utmoſt importance of this phraſe is, that they made this decree by the direction of the Holy Ghoſt *d.d* It ſeemed good to us by the direction of the Holy Ghoſt. And for this there is no need to deviſe a new Phænomenon of infallible aſſiſtance, to be afforded to all Councels (of which there is not one ſyllable in the whole Chapter) ſeeing there are other waies, mentioned in that place, in reſpect whereof they had the Holy Ghoſts direction, and might ſay it ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt and to us, and by which the Holy Ghoſt did give its Teſtimony to their decree directed againſt thoſe that urged the neceſſity of Circumciſion upon the Gentiles. 1. It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt inaſmuch as when the Goſpell was preached to the Gentiles by *Peter—God bare them witneſſe, giving them the Holy Ghoſt, even as he did unto us*, v. 8. ſo making no difference between the Circumciſion and Uncircumciſion. 2. It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt who in the Scripture had foretold the converſion of the Uncircumciſed Gentiles to the Faith and their reception into the Church: And for aſmuch as it is exceeding plaine that the controverſy was debated in that Councell principally if not ſolely by Scripture Arguments, and the concluſion deduced from Scripture evidence, they might very well ſay it ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt, if it was conformable to the Scripture, there being nothing more familiar then this that what is ſaid in Scripture is aſcribed to the Holy Ghoſt, as *Act.* 1.26. *The Holy Ghoſt ſpake by the*

the mouth of David. Heb. 3. 7. *Wherefore as the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, to day if ye will here my voice.*

3. If that phraſe doth imply Infallibility, yet the conſequence doth not hold from Apoſtles to Biſhops: I appeale to any Papiſt (whoſe candour is not gone with his conſcience) whether this follow: A Councell wherein were ſeverall perſons, even in their ſingle capacities Infallible, had infallible direction, when they were met together; *Ergo,* Thoſe Councels wherein there is not one perſon, but is confeſſed in his ſingle Capacity to be Fallible, are Infallible: If any or every Apoſtle had ſingly ſaid, *It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt and to me,* would this have inferred the Infallibility of every ſingle Biſhop! They ſay No: Then let them ſhew a reaſon why the Argument proceeds not as well from ſingle Apoſtles to ſingle Biſhops as from Apoſtles conjoyned in Councell to Biſhops conjoyned.

4. There is alſo another inconſequence: The Apoſtles and Councell had the direction of the Holy-Ghoſt in a concluſion regulated by Scripture and collected from it: *Ergo,* All following Councels have the direction of the Holy-Ghoſt, and cannot erre in all their concluſions whatſoever: Is not this a goodly Argument? This Councel did not erre: *Ergo*, No other Councel can erre: The words are onely aſſertive of a preſent caſe, *viz.* of the direction of this Councell in that point, not at all promiſſive of any thing for the future, and therefore can give us no ſecurity at all for the Infallibility of Councels for the future: it would make fine work if every aſſertion were turned into a promiſe: I might as well argue. *David* was guided by the Spirit of God in the ordering of Gods houſe (as you read, 1*Chron.*28.12, 19.) Therefore all ſucceeding kings of *Judah* were Infallible: Moſes *was faithfull in all Gods houſe,* Heb 3.5. *Ergo,* None of *Moſes*'s Succeſſors could be unfaithfull:

Nothing can be replied, but this; That *David* and *Moſes* had a ſpeciall aſſiſtance not communicated to all their Succeſſors: And the ſame may as truly be ſaid of this Councell and the Apoſtles here aſſembled; But (ſaith *Bellarmine*) *Infallibility being granted to this Councell as being neceſſary for the conſervation of the Church againſt Hereſies, the ſame reaſon and neceſſity continuing the ſame Infallibility muſt conſequently be granted to following generall Councels* (a); I Anſwer,

1. If this Councell by reaſon of the Apoſtles was Infallible, yet this Infallibility was purely accidentall (becauſe perſons indued with Infallibility for other ends were there preſent) and not conferred upon them for the deciſion of the preſent controverſy: and the reaſon why Infallibility was beſtowed upon the Apoſtles was not common to all but particular to that age and ſeaſon, *viz.* becauſe they were to lay a ſolid foundation for, and to give a ſure rule to all the Churches in after ages, and therefore Infallibility was their peculiar priviledge. It is but a lame inference, Infallibility was neceſſary in the firſt founders of Chriſtianity for the Plantation and conſtitution of the Goſpell Church: *Ergo*, It was neceſſary for the conſtant and perpetuall government of the Church in all after ages: Upon the ſame warrant a man may argue thus: Miracles were neceſſary in the firſt erecting and laying the Foundation of the Church: *Ergo*, they were neceſſary for the edification of the Church in all ſucceſſive ages: In both caſes the conſequence is repugnant to common ſenſe and reaſon, and confuted by experience; For

2. That ſuch generall Councels and their Infallibility are not ſo neceſſary as the Papiſts would perſwade us

(a) *De Conciliis lib. 2. cap. 2.*

plainly

plainly appeares from hence that God (who is never defective in neceſſaries) left his Church for three hundred years together wholly without them, and yet the Church ſince the dayes of the Apoſtles never had more ſtability in the Faith, and a greater plenitude of every grace and good work then in thoſe times.

5. That you may ſee how little reaſon there is that Proteſtants ſhould be convinced by this place, take notice that diverſe of the Learned Papiſts are unſatified with this Argument, among which are *Ockam*(a), *Cameracenſis* (b), *Ferus* (c), and Mr *White* in his Treatiſe *De fide & Theologia*, where he thus Anſwers the Argument: *Nor is it materiall that in that Apoſtolicall Councell they uſe thoſe words. It ſeemed good to the Holy-Ghoſt and to us; For firſt, it was a Councell of Prophets in each of which Gods ſpirit dwelt in a ſpeciall manner, at leaſt in the Apoſtles*—And he addes—*If they acted with reaſon, doubtleſſe they acted by the inſtinct of Gods Spirit, although not ſuch as Divines feigne to be aſſiſtant to Councells* (d).

A fifth place they urge is *Mat.* 28. *verſ. the laſt. I am with you allwaies to the end of the World.*

Anſw. 1. Whatſoever this promiſe containes, the Papiſts have no part in it, becauſe it depends upon a condition which they have ſo groſſely violated, *Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you, and loe* (in ſo doing) *I am with you:* Chriſt commanded his Diſciples to ſearch the Scriptures; Papiſts teach the

(a) *Par.* 3. *Dialog. trac.* 1. *lib.* 3. *cap.* 9. (b) *Quæſt. de Reſumpta tit. R.* (c) *In locum.* (d) *Neque intereſt quod in Concilio Apoſtolico inſtitutæ ſunt eæ voces Viſum eſt Spiritui Sancto & nobis. Inprimis enim erat Concilium Prophetarum in quorum ſingulis habitabat Spiritus Sanctus ſpeciali modo, ſaltem in Apoſtolis. Et Paulo poſt: ſi ex ratione agent indubiò ex inſtinctu Spiritus Sancti, etſi non tali qualem fingunt Theologi aſſiſtentem Conciliis.* Tract. 2. parag. 21.

Contrary; Chriſt commanded all his Diſciples that partook of the Bread to drink alſo of the Cup: Papiſts teach otherwiſe, and the like may be inſtanced in an hundred particulars.

2. Put this Argument into forme and it is this: They whom Chriſt promiſeth to be with are Infallible; But Chriſt promiſeth to be with his Church: *Ergo*, This Church is Infallible: Here are three propoſitions, and every one of them faulty in one kind or other. 1. For the Major, it is moſt falſe: For Chriſt hath promiſed to be with every ſingle ſincere believer. *Joh.* 14.23. *If a man love me——wee will come to him and make our abode with him*: So *Joh.* 17.20,21,22,23: And the Holy Ghoſt (by which it is that Chriſt is preſent) is given to every ſuch perſon: *Ergo* (it ſeems) they are Infallible: 2. For the Minor, it is true, but impertinent: Chriſt hath promiſed to be with his Church and with his Miniſters to the worlds end, but not in the ſame manner and with the ſame degree of aſſiſtance as he was with the Apoſtles to give them Infallible direction: If otherwiſe, then as every ſingle Apoſtle was, ſo every ſingle Miniſter muſt be Infallible, which they themſelves deny. 3. The Concluſion if granted, reacheth not to Rome: for there being ſeverall Churches pretending to this promiſe, and the Text no more determining it ſelf to one then to the other, it may as well be claimed by the Greek or Engliſh as by the Romiſh Church; Nay, which is more, Rome is excluded or rather hath excluded her ſelfe from it, as we have ſeen, and by her diſobedience to Chriſts commands, hath cut off her Title to his promiſe.

§. 19. There is one place more they uſe to plead; it is *Mat.* 18 20. *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midſt of them.* This I confeſſe drives the Naile home: I ſee they are reſolved to make ſure work. For now it matters not what becomes

of

of the Infallibility of the Pope or generall Councels, or the Univerſall Church; For whereever there are but two or three Jeſuites met together, pretending Chriſts name, there is Infallibility: I think thoſe Hereticks had better have held their Tongues, for then the Church of Rome would have been contented to aſſert the Infallibility of Pope or Councels, but now they will not abate them an Ace, but will make it good in ſpight of Scripture, Fathers, and Councels, and all the World, that every leaſh of Popiſh Prieſts is Infallible.

But I need ſay nothing more in Anſwer to this ridiculous Argument, becauſe the Anſwers to the laſt Argument will ſerve for this alſo, and their own great Doctors confeſſe the impertinency of this allegation, and amongſt them two great names, *Stapleton* (a) and *Gregory de Valentiâ* (b): And theſe are the Scriptures upon which they ground their Monſtrous conceit of the Infallibility of Councels: what a ſandy Foundation they have for it in Tradition we ſhewed before: And how little countenance they have from Scripture, and how abſurdly they wreſt that to their own deſtruction hath been now diſcovered: And therefore I may conclude this Doctrine hath no footing in Scripture, nor Tradition, which was the firſt branch of the Propoſition to be proved.

§. 20. And here I might ſet up my reſt: For having pulled down the two Pillars upon which the building of Infallibility ſtands, I know no remedy but it muſt fall to the ground: But for the more abundant demonſtration of the αὐτοκατάκρισις of the Romiſh Doctors, and vanity of their Religion, I ſhall adde a ſecond conſideration and ſhew, that however when they diſcourſe with Proteſtants, they make a great noiſe about the Infallibi-

(a) *Con. 6. qu. 3. art. 4.* (b) *Tom. 3. Diſp. 1. qu. 1. punct. 7.*

lity

lity of councels, yet when they debate the point among themſelves, none deny it with greater ſeriouſneſs, nor diſpute againſt it with more earneſtneſſe then diverſe of themſelves. I ſpeak not now of the private opinions of ſome obſcure Doctors among them, but of the publick doctrines of their Church, the opinion of the Popes, Cardinals, and all the Jeſuites and ſtouteſt champions of the Romiſh Church, and the generality of Italian, Spaniſh, and Germane Papiſts, and almoſt all (ſome of the French faction excepted) do expreſly deny the infallibility of Councels, and, which is more, they diſpute againſt it: particularly *Cajetan*, and *Bellarmine*, and *Gregory de Valentia*, ſome of whoſe Arguments are theſe. *Infallibility is not in the headleſſe body, therefore a councell in it ſelf is not infallible That from which there is appeal, is not infallible, but there lyes an appeal from a councell to the Pope, Ergo. The Church is committed to Peter, not to a councell, Ergo.* Thus *Cajetan* (a). *The Pope can either approve or reject the decrees of a Councel, Ergo the Councel is not infallible. The Councel hath its infallibility from its conjunction with her head the Pope, Ergo. Many Councels have erred in decrees of faith, Ergo.* Thus *Bellarmine* (b). By the way remember, this is the Gentleman that even now urged *Joh.* 16. to prove, that Councels could not erre, and now he proves they have erred: it were well if the Romaniſts had either better conſciences, or better memories. *God doth nothing in vain, but the gift of infallibility would be given to Councels in vain ſeeing the Pope hath it, Ergo. That which is repugnant to our moſt aſſured faith concerning the Pope's primacy is not to be admitted, But the ſupreme and infallible authority of Councels is repugnant to the*

(a) De Authoritate Papæ & Concilii tract. 1. cap. 6. & 8. & 11. et 12. (b) De authoritate Concilii cap. 11.

Pope's

Pope's primacy, Ergo: Thus *Gregory de Valentia* (a). So you ſee, by their own argument, either the Pope's primacy or the Councels infallibility is loſt: & as the Jeſuites on the one ſide thus ſtrenuouſly diſpute down the infallibility and ſupremacy of Councels, ſo their Adverſaries on the other ſide do as ſtoutly overthrow the ſupremacy and infallibility of the Pope, wherein beſides the poſitive teſtimonies of diverſe of the moſt learned & antient Papiſts, they have the ſuffrage of two late famous Popiſh Councels *Conſtance* and *Baſil*, ſuch a ſpirit of giddineſs and diviſion hath God put amongſt theſe Builders of *Babel:* And yet this is the Jeruſalem, a city united in it ſelf. Theſe are the men that reproach the Proteſtant Churches with their diviſions in ſome petite controverſies, whilſt they themſelves are ſo irreconcileably divided in that, upon which the deciſion of all other controverſies depends, viz. in the rule and judge of controverſies. I think I need not ſay much more: For the more antient Papiſts, he that ſhall look into that excellent diſcourſe of *Robert Baronius* againſt *Turnbull*, called *Apologia pro diſputatione de formali objecto fidei*, will find the infallibility of Councels expreſly denied by *Ockam, Cameracenſis, Waldenſis, Panormitanus, Antoninus, Cuſanus*, (all venerable names in the Romiſh Church)whoſe words are there recited(b). And for the modern Papiſts it may ſuffice to name three authors of principle account, whom the reſt of the Herd do follow. *Melchior Canus* laies down their doctrine in two Propoſitions. 1. *A general Councel, which is not called and confirmed by the Pope, may erre in the faith.* 2. *Provincial Councels, which are confirmed by the Pope, cannot erre; the reſt may erre*(c). And *Bellarmine* ſaith the ſame

(a) Anal fidei.lib.8.cap. 7.

(b) *Tract.* 5. *Cap.* 19.

(c) 1. *Concilium generale, quod non congregatum & confirmatum eſt auctoritate Pontificis, poteſt in fide*

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thing almoſt in the ſame words (*a*), and when he was gravel'd with the authority of that famous Councel of *Chalcedon*, (a Councel that Pope *Gregory* the great ſaid *he reverenced as one of the four Goſpels*) and a Decree of theirs againſt the Primacy of the Biſhop of *Rome*, he anſwers roundly, that *that Decree is of no force, becauſe it was made in the abſence of the Pope's Legates*, who afterwards did proteſt againſt it (*b*). Where by the way we may take notice, what opinion that œcumenical Councel had of the Pope's Supremacy and Infallibility, who firſt paſſed and afterwards ratified that decree, notwithſtanding all the ſolicitations and proteſtations of the Romane Legate in the Pope's name to the contrary. In like manner ſaith *Andradius*, *That Councell erred, in as much as it did raſhly and without cauſe prefer the Church of Conſtantinople before that of Alexandria and Antioch* (*c*). And *Gregory de Valentia* being aſſaulted with a Canon of the *Synodus Trullana*, defends himſelf with this anſwer: *That Synod is of no authority, becauſe its Canons were not confirmed by the Pope* (*d*).

§ 21. It is true, the Papiſts perceiving the danger of their cauſe from this difference between the Pope and Councels, have at laſt found out this Ξύλον σάγμακον (and

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errare. 2. Concilia Provincialia, quæ à Papa confirmantur, errare non poſſunt, reliqua autem poſſunt. loc. com lib. 5. c. 4.

(a) *De Conciliis. lib. 2. c. 11.*

(b) *Decretum illud magni quidem eſt Concilii, ſed non legitimè factum, proinde nullius eſt roboris, vel authoritatis, quia factum eſt abſentibus legatis Apoſtolicæ ſedis & poſtea reclamantibus. De Pontif. lib. 2. c. 17. §. Quart.*

(c) *Erravit in eo, quòd temere & nullâ ratione Conſtantinopolitanam Eccleſiam Alexandrinæ & Antiochenæ duxerint præferendam. In defenſ. fidei. lib. 1.*

(d) *Trullana Synodus nullius eſt authoritatis, quia non erant ejus Canones approbati à Pontifice Romano. In libro de Cœlibatu. p. 861.*

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by that means they pretend they are all agreed) the Pope and Councell joyning together are infallible: And in this ſenſe their doctrine is true, that general councels are infallible, viz. if they are called and confirmed by the Pope. For anſwer whereunto I commend four things to the Readers obſervation.

1. Obſerve the non-ſenſe of this opinion. The queſtion is, whether general councels lawfully called have an infallible aſſiſtance and guidance of the Spirit in the forming of their decrees? The Papiſts affirm, we deny: now comes in a condition in their affirmation, which overthrowes the affirmation it ſelf. They are infallible (ſay they) if the Pope confirms them: well then, the Councel meets, conſiders, decrees; here is their work done, hitherto (ſay our Maſters) they are fallible: they ſend them to the Pope for confirmation, for *ubi deſinit Concilium, incipit Papa:* if the Pope confirms them, they are infallible; if he diſapprove them, they are fallible. And ſo, it ſeems, the councell receives infallible direction from God for their work, after their work is done; and it ceaſeth to be, before it be infallible, in ſpight of the old maxime of the Logicians, *Ab* eſt *tertii adjecti, ad* eſt *ſecundi adjecti valet conſecutio.* Really the councels have an hard bargain of it, that cannot get Infallibility, till they have loſt their exiſtency.

2. Obſerve the hypocriſy and ſelf conviction of this opinion. The infallibility of councels is the great γλαυκωμα caſt before the eyes of thoſe who cannot penetrate into the depth of things. Several Scriptures are pretended, which are ſaid evidently to prove this infallibility: now we ſee they themſelves deny the thing, they pretend to prove; and conncels are infallible no further then the Pope pleaſeth. And with this key you muſt open all the alledged Scriptures: you muſt hear the Church, i. e. unleſſe the Pope ſhut up your eares. Chriſt is preſent where

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two or three are met together in his name, viz if they have the Pope's approbation. The Spirit will lead you into all rruth, viz. if you follow the inſtructions of his Holineſſe. And if a councel may ſay, *It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt and us*, it ſignifies nothing, if it be not added, *and to our Lord the Pope*. Thus Councels are meer cyphers, except the Pope adde his figure: and Councels are joyned with Popes, only as *Bibulus* was with *Cæſar*, to fill up a vacancy, and make a noiſe in vulgar eares. Nor is the wound of the Popiſh cauſe healed by this device, but only skinned over: for as the aſſertors of the infallibility of councels deny infalliblity to the Pope, further then he adheres to ſuch councels; ſo the aſſertors of Papal infallibility allow to councels no infallibility, but what they have in dependence upon, and by influence from the Pope. So *Bellarmine* in terms ſaith, *Infallibility doth not come partly from the Pope, and partly from the Councel, but wholly from the Pope* (a). And *Stapleton* is expreſſe: *The Pope receives no new power, nor authority, nor infallibility from the addition of a Councel* (b). What need I ſay more, ſuch contemptuous thoughts hath *Bellarmine* of the infallibility of councels, that he ſpends one entire chapter upon the proof of this Propoſition, *That general Councels may erre, if they do not follow the Pope's inſtruction, if they have not the Legates conſent*; nay more, *if it be in a point wherein the Legates have no certain inſtructions from the Pope*: and he gives us amongſt many inſtances of erring Councels this remarkable one: *The Councel of Baſil by common conſent, and with the Legates concurrence concluded, that a Councel is above the Pope, which certainly is now judged er-*

(a) *Tota firmitas Conciliorum legitimorum eſt à Pontifice, non partim à Pontifice, partim à Concilio. De Pontif. lib. 4. c. 3.*

(b) *Papa adjuncto Concilio nullam poteſtatem, vel authoritatem, vel etiam certitudinem in judicando novam acquirit. In relect. con. 6. qu. 3. art. 5.*

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roneous (a). You ſee how hard it is for Councels to carry their diſh eaven. By what hath been ſaid it appeares what a ſorry foundation the Infallibility of Councels is, when from their principles it unavoidably followes, That a colledge of Jeſuites is as infallible as a generall Councel: for they confeſſe a provinciall Councell (which in it ſelfe hath no more Authority to oblige the whole Church then ſuch a Colledge) is Infallible with the Popes concurrence, and without it generall Councels are Fallible.

3. Obſerve the inſufficiency of this evaſion: For if Infallibility were granted to ſuch a combination of Pope and Councell, this gives them no reliefe, ſave onely during the Seſſion of the Councell, for when the Councell is diſſolved, their Writings muſt indure the ſame fate with the writings of the Apoſtles of being unable to Judg or decide controverſies: For all the Papiſts moſt vehemently plead for the neceſſity of a living Judge that can heare both parties and determine all emergent controverſies: Thus Infallibility is not ſo much as *res unius ætatis*: Nay ofttimes it is but *res unius anni*, like *Jonah's* gourd, it comes up in a night and withers in a night. And the Church for three hundred years after Chriſt had no Infallibility, and ſince the Councell of Trent the Papiſts have not had an Infallible judge, and at this day their Church hath no Infallibility and conſequently no ſolid Foundation for their Faith.

4. Obſerve the prepoſterouſneſſe of this opinion: If Councels come to the Pope for Confirmation, he may ſay to them as *John* the *Baptiſt* ſaid to Chriſt, *Mat.* 3,14. *I have need to be baptized of thee and comeſt thou to me?*

(a) *Concilium* Baſilienſe *una cum legato Pontificis communi conſenſu ſtatuit Concilium eſſe ſupra Papam, quod rectè nunc judicatur erroneum: De Romano Pontifice lib.* 2. *cap.* 11.

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So may the Pope ſay, I have need to be confirmed by your Authority, and without you am but *magni nominis umbra*, and do you come to me? But I confeſſe *manus manum feriat*. If the Pope have any Infallibility, he had it from Councels, for Scripture owns it not (as we have ſeen) and the particular Fathers could not give what they never had, and now it is good manners to requite them, and ſo he comunicates to them that Infallibility he receives from them.

To conclude this conſideration: It is ſufficient for my purpoſe which is acknowledged by the greateſt and moſt conſiderable part of the Romiſh Church at this day, That generall Councels in themſelves are not Infallible, and conſequently are no ſolid Foundation for a Papiſts Faith, which is all this Propoſition pretended to make good, though you ſee I have given them an ἐπίμετρον.

§. 22. A third conſideration is this: If the Infallibility of general Councels rightly called conſtituted and ordered, were granted, yet this would give no Advantage to the Romiſh cauſe nor ſecurity to their Faith, and that for ſuch reaſons as diverſe of the moſt Learned Papiſts themſelves do ſtamp with their approbation. And here I might inſiſt upon ſundry particulars, but I ſhall confine my ſelfe to a few, and for the reſt refer you only to one of their own Authours, *White* in the oft mentioned Treatiſe who thus breaks out his doubts concerning this Doctrine of the Infallibility of Councels: --*If you aſſert an unknown and inviſible influence of Gods Spirit it is ſo uncertaine and doubtfull, that it is fruitleſſe to contend about it: Seeing it is matter of ſtrife, rather then evidence to what Councels; and when this aſſiſtance is given: whileſt ſome quarrell with the calling, others the abſence of nations, or Patriarchs, and others diſpute about the preſidency, and others about the method and circumſtances in the handling of queſtions: others about the number, weight, or*

degree

degree of ſuffrages: others about Confirmation: and others require the Churches conſent, ere it can be known whether this Aſſiſtance belong to the Councell, or no (a). Where you may obſerve no leſſe then ten ſeverall cauſes of doubting, and yet all theſe uncertainties they will rather run upon, then acknowledge the Authority and ſufficiency of the Holy Scriptures which are called a more ſure word (*2 Pet.* 1.19.) then that which had another kind and far higher degree of certainty then the decrees of Councels can ever arrive at, but I muſt not reſt in generals. I ſhall particularly acquaint you with ſome of the Intrigues of the Romiſh Church and their own requiſites to the legitimation of Councels: I ſhall pick out three. 1. They confeſſe the Councell which is Infallible muſt be œcumenicall. 2. And its decrees muſt be ratified by the conſent and approbation of the whole Church. 3. They muſt proceed ſincerely, and faithfully, and piouſly in it: Now in all theſe things there are notorious defects in the Church and Councels of Rome.

§. 23. 1. Moſt Papiſts grant that, that Councell, to which Infallibility is promiſed, muſt be generall or œcumenicall: and they that pretend to aſſert the Infallibility of Provinciall Councels when confirmed by the Pope, do indeed utterly reject the Infallibility of all Councels,

(a) *Sed ſi ad ignotum & inviſibilem afflatum Spiritus Sancti relegetur, evadit adeo incerta & dubia, ut ſine fructu aliquo de eâ certetur Cum quibus Conciliis & quando hæc aſſiſtentia debeatur, altercationis, non evidentiæ plenum ſit. His convocationem, illis Patriarcharum, aliis nationum abſentiam calumniantibus; aliis de præſidentiâ diſputantibus, aliis de Methodo & circumſtantiis agitandarum quæſtionum; Aliis de ſuffragiorum numero, pondere gradu; Aliis tandem dè confirmatione decertantibus; Imo & conſenſum ſeu acceptationem Eccleſiæ per quietum uſum & praxim efflagitantibus, ut fieri poſſit, utrum hæc aſſiſtentia Spiritus Sancti ſit concilio debita necne. De fide & Theologiâ. tract. 2. parag. 21.*

and ascribe it wholly to the Pope, and to Councels onely by participation from him and in dependence upon him: If then any Councels be Infallible, they must be generall: to which purpose they alledge the saying of St *Austin, That those onely are* Concilia plenaria, *full and general Councels which are collected out of all the Christian World* (a) Hence the seaventh Synod disowned the *Constantinopolitan* Councell and their decrees against Images, *because they were not a generall Councell and had not all the Patriarchs there* (b). And *S. Clara* calls it *The most received Doctrine of their Church*, and cites severall Authors of great note to that purpose (c). Now to assume: The Councels pretended by the Romanists were no generall councels. To say nothing of former Councels (which in their greatest plenitude were onely conventions of the Churches in the Romane Empire.) The later Councels (on whom the weight of the Popish cause principally depends) were not œcumenicall Councels. There is one acknowledged defect in them all, to wit, the absence of the Greek Church. Cardinal *Cusanus* complaines, *At present* (Alas!) *the Catholick Church, and the Parochial Church of Rome have but one Councell, seeing the whole Church is now reduced to one Patriarchate* (d). And as the Objection is really unanswerable, so that which is offered in stead of an Answer is very considerable which S. *Clara.* represents out of *Cusanus* and *Barlaam*: *That it matters*

(a) *Illa sola sunt Concilia plenaria quæ fiunt ex universo orbe Christiano lib.2. de Bapt. cap.3.* (b) *Quia sonus indictionis non exiit in omnem terram, & etiam quia non habebat omnes Patriarchas, nec eorum Delegatos.* (c) *In systemate fidei cap. 27. receptissimam hanc Doctrinam num.1.*

(d) *Hodie (proh dolor!) Catholicæ Ecclesiæ & Parochialis Romanæ sedis unum est Concilium cum tota Ecclesia redacta sit ad illum tantum Patriarchatum; lib. de Concordiâ. 2. c. 15.*

not that onely the Romane Patriarch and thoſe united to him are there, and that the Schiſmaticall Patriarcks are abſent, for generall Councels are not to be collected out of Hereticks and Schiſmaticks, but out of the Orthodox, and ſuch as are united to the Church (a). From whence I gather two things. 1. That if the Church of Rome cannot aſſoile her ſelf from the imputation of Hereſy (which by the leaneneſſe of their replies to the inditements of Proteſtant Authors ſufficiently appeares they are not able to do) their Councels are conſtituted *ex Indebitâ materiâ*, of undue materials, and therefore cannot pretend to Infallibility, if there were any ſuch thing *in rerum naturâ*. 2. That we are not to believe the Orthodoxy and much leſſe the Infallibility of Councels upon the credit of their naked aſſertion and abſolute Authority, as the Papiſts affirme (ſeeing the moſt Hereticall and Schiſmaticall Councels have ever aſſerted themſelves to be Orthodox) but it is the right and priviledge of Subjects to examine and judge of the legitimateneſſe of Councels, and conſequently of the validity of their decrees.

§. 24. The ſecond particular is this: *That Councels are not infallible nor their decrees unquestionable, unleſſe they have the tacit conſent and approbation of the whole Church.* This poſition is laid down by *S. Clara* (in the forementioned Treatiſe) *There is required a tacit or interpretative ratification of the whole Church to compleat the definition of a Councell* (b): Nor is this his private opinion, but he there confirmes it from the words of *Panormitanes, Turnball*, Pope *Leo, Petrus â Soto, Caſtillo, Mi-*

(a) *Generalia enim Concilia non ex hæreticis & ſchiſmaticis, ſed ex Orthodoxis & Eccleſiâ colligi debent: Syſtem: fidei cap. 27. pag. 301.*

(b) *Ratihabitio igitur nempe tacita vel interpretativa univerſalis Eccleſiæ requiritur ad complendam Concilii definitionem. In ſyſtem. fidei. cap. 22.*

randula, Gerſonius and others (a): And afterwards he quotes theſe words out of *Petrus D' Aliaco*, *That generall Councells may erre, unleſſe when they are accepted by the Univerſall Church and then they are Infallible* (b). And in another place himſelfe expreſſely tels us *We are not preſently to pronounce a thing* de fide *by reaſon of ſome expreſſions of Councels or their Canons, but we muſt diligently inquire the conſtant judgment of the Church, elſe we ſhall finde many Canons of Faith which doe not agree with the truth according to the opinion of many* (c). And *Coltius* hath theſe words, *As wee have ſeen before the common conſent of the Church hath rendred the decrees of Popes and Councels invalid* (d). I mention this the more fully, becauſe it is a pretty deviſe. It muſt be confeſſed the Religion of Rome cannot eaſily be miſtaken for a piece of Piety but he that ſhall denie it to be an Art of Policy will quickly be confuted and here is an inſtance will put him to ſilence.

There is a double diſcovery of the Romiſh ſubtilty in this buſineſſe.

1. You ſee how handſomely they make a vertue of neceſſity: now they manage it as a Principle taken up

(a) Idem in cap. 23. per totum. (b) *Probabiliter reſpondent aliqui, quòd Concilium generale poteſt errare, & tamen quando & in quantum Concilia univerſalia acceptantur ab Eccleſia univerſali, infallibilitatem ſis tribuit. Id. c. 16.*

(c) *Non ſtatim pronuntiandum quid vis eſſe de fide ex quibuſlibet Canonum vel etiam Conciliorum loquendi formulis ſublinde apparentibus, ſed conſtans Eccleſiæ judicium tam ibi quam alibi diligenter expendendum eſt, alioquin multos fidei Canones numerabimus, qui veram doctrinam haud ſapiunt, in multorum opinionibus. Id. cap. 22.*

(d) *Quemadmodum ſupra vidimus, publicam reclamantis Eccleſiæ vocem Pontificum & Conciliorum decretis robur detraxiſſe. De Hierarchiâ lib. 4. cap. 12.*

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on choice, whereas *S. Clara* himſelf ſufficiently inſinuates, that they were forced to it *ſe defendendo* and took it up at a forced put: for ſpeaking of the former rules of diſcerning a generall Councell he confeſſeth, *That their buſineſſe is very intricate and liable to many troubleſome objections againſt the lawfulneſſe of their Councels, but here is a ſhort way to obviate thoſe difficulties by arguing from the reception of the Church, for if the Church receive it for a generall Councell, we need not trouble our ſelves about little matters, ſince this reception is ſufficient evidence*(a).

2. Here is an excellent Antidote againſt the ſaucy decrees of ſeverall Councels repugnant to the Popes Supreme Authority: If the ſixth Councell of Carthage be pleaded that *there ſhould be no appeales to Rome from beyond the Seas*, if that of the Councell of *Chalcedon* be urged, wherein they give ἰσοτιμία *the ſame honours and priviledges to the Biſhop of Conſtantinople as to the Biſhop of Rome.* If the later Councels of Conſtance and *Baſil* be alledged wherein the Popes ſubjection to Councels is poſitively determined: Now here is an Anſwer ready to this, and to all that former Councels ſaid and to all that any Councell ſhall ever ſay to the Worlds end *viz.* The Canons of theſe Councels were not received by the whole Church, but oppoſed and rejected by the Church and Biſhop of Rome, a great and eminent part of it: Thus, I think, they have brought off their maſter the Pope with honour, and as he was Infallible, ſo now they have made

(a) *Cum negotium ſit valde perplexum, multi etiam multa objectare ſoleant —quibus ea illegitima eſſe contendunt, in quibus non parum faceſſunt nobis moleſtiæ: In his vero omnibus, hoc ſaltem modo multum diminuetur difficultas, arguendo à poſteriori ſcilicet ex ipſâ receptione Eccleſiæ utique ſi Eccleſia pro univerſali receperit, non erit opus ſcrupuloſius indagare minutiora, adeo ut hæc receptio nobis manifeſtet, quodnam concilium æſtimari debeat tale; ubi ſupra cap. 26.*

him invulnerable. Scripture cannot hurt him, for he hath the key of Interpretation. Fathers cannot reach him, for they are his Children (ſaith *Bellarmine.*) As it is no newes for the Pope to be well ſtored with Children; And now Councels cannot touch him, for he will hinder their univerſall reception: And if the Romiſh Doctors be beaten out of this conceit, it is but ſtudying ſome new device which is eaſily done by men that want no wit and have no conſcience: for it is reſolved to hold the Concluſion, though the poore premiſes may be put to hard ſhifts. Well then, to allow them their ſuppoſition, and all the benefits of it they muſt remember the rule of the Lawyers: *Qui ſentit commodum debet ſentire & onus*: Benefit and inconvenience muſt goe together. And this is the inconvenience and miſchiefe which they are ſtill forced into notwithſtanding all their tricks and ſtratagems, even to eat their own words and to pull down with one hand that Infallibility which they build up with another; For how can the Councell or the Pope either be ſaid to have that infallible guidance (which is pretended) in the making of their decrees if the Churches non-reception may prove their Fallibility? But here is the wonder-working power of the Church of Rome: do not think ſtrange when you read that paſſage in the Councell of *Lateran* delivered in an Oration before the Pope and Councell, *That the Pope hath a power above all power in heaven or earth* (a). For he can do that which the Schoolmen unanimouſly put out of the reach of every power in Heaven or Earth, *viz. factum infectum reddere*, recall things that are paſt, and by this Argument prove, that, that Councell which was Infalli-

(a) *In Papa omnem eſſe poteſtatem ſupra omnes poteſtates, tam cæli, quam terræ dixit Stephanus Archiepiſcopus Patracenſis in oratione in Concilio Lateranenſi corum Leone 10.*

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ble while it ſat, after its diſſolution is become Fallible. But to returne: This is to precipitate themſelves into thoſe abſurdities which they charge upon us. This is to make the Church judge of her Judges: This is to take away all the ſecurity of their Faith if we may believe their own famous Councell of *Baſil*, whoſe words are theſe: *Nor let any man preſume to ſay that a generall Councell may erre, for if once this pernicious errour were admitted, the whole Catholick Faith would ſtagger, and we ſhould have nothing certaine in the Church, for by the ſame reaſon that one may erre, the reſt may erre alſo* (a). Beſides hereby they run into a new Circle (as if all their former Circles were not ſufficient) If you aske what it is which makes the Faith of the Romiſh Church and people ſure and Infallible? It is the Infallibility of the Pope and Councell: If you aske againe what it is which makes the decrees of Pope and Councell Infallible? It is the Churches reception of them; and yet all this if granted will not relieve them, for that the decrees of their Popes and Councels have no ſuch reception of the univerſall Church, appeares ſufficiently from the publick diſſent of ſo many famous and flouriſhing Churches in the World, I meane the Greek and Proteſtant Churches which do not therefore ceaſe to be members of the Catholick Church, becauſe the Papiſts diſowne them no more then the Popiſh Churches become true members by their pretending to that Title.

§.25.3. There is another aſſertion of the Papiſts: That Councels are not Infallible unleſſe they be rightly conſti-

(a) *Nec quiſquam illud dicere præſumat. Quod aliquod generale Concilium legitime congregatum invalidum ſit, aut errare poſſit, quia ſi hic pernicioſus error admitteretur, tota Catholica fides vacillaret, nec aliquid certi in Eccleſiâ haberemus quia, quâ ratione poteſt errare unum, poſſunt errare & reliqua. in Reſponſ. Synodali.*

tuted and ordered: for this I ſhall deale with them, as the Apoſtles did with their Kinſmen the Cretians, I ſhall implead them with an εἶπε τις ἐξ αὐτῶν ἴδιος αὐτῶν προφήτης. Nay, not one but many πολλοὶ καὶ ἀγαθοὶ in their opinion. Councels (ſay they) may erre if they do not proceed *Conciliariter*, *i.e.* in a regular manner ſaith *S. Clara*, his words are theſe: *The moſt Learned Corduba in Quæſtionario lib. 4. qu. 1.* (*quoting* Roſſenſis *in his Prologue againſt* Luther *and* Horantius *in his places* lib. 2. cap. 17.) *ſaith, that God hath promiſed his aſſiſtance to a Councell, when they do what in them lies* —— *If they be Biſhops, and Learned and prudent men ſelected out of the whole Church, if they proceed without Carnall affections, and with a love to the Truth, then, and not otherwiſe it is gathered lawfully, and in Chriſt name* (a). Thus *Bellarmine* preſſed with the Authority of the Councell of *Chalcedon* againſt the Popes Supremacy ſaith, *A lawfull Councell may erre in thoſe things wherein it acts not lawfully* (b). And *Petrus à Soto* (a man of great account amongſt them) tels us this is the ſence of their aſſertion, That Councels cannot erre: *They underſtand it* (*ſaith he*) *of Councels lawfully congregated and acting without fraud and deceit* (c). And Pope *Leo* ſpeaking of the cauſes of the errours of the Councell of *Epheſus* aſſignes this, becauſe *they did not proceed with a*

(a) *Doctiſſimus* Corduba *in Quæſtionario citans* Roſſenſem *in Prologo contra* Lutherum *in veritate octavâ &* Horantium *in locis l. 2. c. 17. dicit Chriſtum promiſiſſe aſſiſtentiam Spiritus Sancti, quando Concilium facit quod in ſe eſt* —— *ſi Epiſcopi & viri Docti & prudentes ex totâ Eccleſiâ, ſi ſine aſſertione humanâ* —— *ſed affectu veritatis* —— *tunc & non aliter eſt legitimè & in nomine Chriſti congregatum. In ſyſtem. cap. 20.* (b) *Concilium legitimum poteſt errare in iis quæ non legitimè agit de Conciliis lib. 2. c. 7.* (c) *Cum dicunt Concilia non poſſe errare, intelligunt legitimè congregata et abſque fraude et dolo agentia; In defenſione c. 74.*

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pure conſcience and right judgment (a). So *Malderus* in his Treatiſe againſt the Synod of *Dort* ſaith: *In vaine do Synods aſſemble, and men go to them, when they do not remove all ſiniſter affection and onely ſeek that which is Chriſts*; and he addes, *Then indeed they are gathered together in Chriſts name, then Chriſt is in the midſt of them* (b). The ſumme is this: Infallible aſſiſtance is not a gift diſpenſed promiſcuouſly to Pope or Biſhops howſoever they demeane themſelves; but only upon their good behaviour, being the priviledge of thoſe alone who act with diligence, fidelity, ſincere love to the Truth and good conſcience; that is to ſay, to ſuch perſons as few Popes and Popiſh Biſhops have been: ſo that if any Popes or Biſhops violate the conditions on their parts required, they may loſe the priviledge on Gods part promiſed: If they be unſincere in their intentions, and biaſſed with humane affection, if ambition or covetouſneſſe be in their hearts and ſway their actions, *actum eſt de Infallibilitate* their infallibility is laid in the duſt: It is true *S. Clara* ſaith *We are to ſuppoſe that a Pope and Councell do thus proceed unleſſe the contrary be evident* (c). But I Anſwer,

1. Thus the Doctrine of Infallibility and the whole weight of the Romiſh Church and cauſe depends upon a meer ſuppoſition, and (which is far worſe) upon ſuch an one as can never be proved: for who can know the ſincerity of another mans intentions but himſelfe? *What man knoweth the things of a man ſave the ſpirit of a man that is in him?* 1 Cor. 2.

(a) *Eo quod non puræ conſcientiæ et recto judicio ſecundum conſuetudinem, hi qui collecti ſunt, de fide et erratibus protulerunt. In Epiſ.* 24.

(b) *Fruſtra Synodi coeunt, fruſtra ad eas itur, quando non omni affectu ſequiori remoto, ſolum id quæritur quod Chriſti eſt —— Tum demum in nomine Chriſti —— congregantur, tum demum in medio eorum eſt Chriſtus in Antiſynodico.* (c) *Supponendum quod ſemper ſic procedat, niſi conſtet de oppoſito. Syſtem. cap.* 20.

2. I note that theſe men craftily ſhift off the prooſe to us when it belongs to them for *Aſſerenti incumbit probatio.* He that ſaith a Pope or Councell proceeding ſincerely and piouſly is infallible & bound to prove two things. 1. That ſuch an one is a lawfull Pope or Councell. 2. That ſuch a lawfull Pope or Councell proceed lawfully (as *Bellarmine* himſelfe requires) and piouſly. And as it were an abſurd conceit, if I require a proof that ſuch a man is lawfull Pope, to ſay *Supponendum eſt* &c. We muſt ſuppoſe him to be the lawfull Pope, unleſſe the contrary be evident, ſo is it alſo when I expect a prooſe of the ſincerity of his intentions, inſtead of a *Probandum*, to tell me *ſupponendum eſt*, which is to tell me that I muſt venture my Salvation upon a prooſleſſe aſſertion: And it is a new ſtraine of Popiſh Logick that ſuppoſitions muſt paſſe for Arguments. 3. I obſerve the deſperate iſſue of Popiſh principles, the foundation of their Faith and Hope is the Infallibility of Pope or Councell: This Infallibility they can have no aſſurance of, which I thus prove. No man can have aſſurance of the performance of a conditionall promiſe unleſſe he have aſſurance of the performance of the condition; but the promiſe of Infallibility is a conditionall promiſe depending upon the honeſty and ſincerity of a mans intentions which another man can never be aſſured of. Here we have a remarkable evidence of the perverſe Spirit of our Adverſaries and the indefenſibleneſſe of their cauſe: Thoſe very men that are ſo curious and criticall that they will not allow a man to be ſure of his own ſincerity now will needs have us to reſt aſſured of the ſincerity of another man: But how are we aſſured? Why, with a *non conſtat de oppoſito*: An Ingenious device which will ſerve for many excellent purpoſes: Thus I may be aſſured that the preſent great *Mogul* is turned Chriſtian, becauſe the contrary is not evident: Thus I may be aſſu-

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red of the vertue, wiſdome, and piety of every perſon that now lives at Rome, becauſe the contrary is not evident to me. In a word, according to their Doctrines and Anſwers, A Papiſt hath no greater aſſurance of the Popes or Councels Infallibility, then I have *That there is a World in the Moon*: *That the day of Judgment ſhall be next year*: *Or that I ſhall die to morrow*: *Or that a thouſand ſoules ſhall be converted by the next Sermon I preach*, becauſe in all theſe I may ſay *non conſtat de oppoſito*, the contrary is not evident. Really the Proteſtants ought not to be envious at the aſſurance of the Papiſts, for they are contented with very moderate termes for it. If they would be ſatisfied with the ſame kind of aſſurance in conveyance of worldly eſtates as they are in the Salvation of their Soules, I believe they would get away all good bargaines from their neighbours; but you will finde them wiſer there.

4. But alas for them I fear I ſhall be cruell to them, for I cannot allow their *non conſtat de oppoſito*; They tell us we muſt ſuppoſe that Popes and Councels have allwaies acted ſincerely and honeſtly, becauſe we do not know the contrary: an aſſertion which whoſoever will undertake to make good muſt combat the Faith of all Hiſtory: I ſhall ſay nothing of the cenſures of Proteſtants upon them (whoſe intereſt and opinion may render them ſuſpected of partiality:) But I hope they will not take it amiſſe if I repreſent ſome few of thoſe innumerable Teſtimonies which their own moſt learned and approved Authors have given concerning the hypocriſy, impiety, fraud, ambition, avarice of their infallible Gentlemen, the Popes, and Popiſh Biſhops. And were it not that the Pope hath a power of turning vice into vertue at his pleaſure (according to that ſaying of *Bellarmines*, *In a good ſence Chriſt hath given to* Peter *a power of making ſinne*

ſinne to be no ſin (a)) it were impoſſible to miſtake the Pope for a Saint let us here ſome few of the expreſſions of ſuch as lived and died in their communion: For the Popes he that reads their own Hiſtorians, would think the name of Holineſſe were given to them by Antiphraſis, and that in meer pity they were allowed the name who did not pretend to the thing. The Papall chaire is called by themſelves *Cathedra peſtilentiæ* a peſtilentiall chaire. *Genebrard* himſelfe though a ſworn vaſſall of the Popes confeſſeth, as I obſerved before, that for 150 years together the Popes were Apoſtatici, Apoſtates not Apoſtolicks; as if they ſucceeded *Peter* onely in the denying of his maſter: and yet theſe are our infallible maſters: who doubts but they can worke miracles at Rome, that can make Apoſtacy and Infallibility dwell together in the ſame perſon: and however our Saviour ſaid *No man can ſerve two maſters*, and St *Paul*, *What communion can there be between Chriſt and Belial*, yet the Papiſts are infallibly ſure of the contrary, for (if their moſt approved Authours may be credited) diverſe of the Popes have had infallible guidance of Gods ſpirit and undoubted communion with the Devill at the ſame time; for ſo ſaith *Platina* (ſometimes the Popes library keeper) *All the Popes from* Sylveſter *the ſecond even to* Gregory *the ſeventh incluſively* (which were about 18 Popes) *were Magitians* (b). But I confeſſe all the Popes were not conjurers for ſome of them were ſuch ſilly wretches that they did not underſtand Grammer according to the report

(a) *In bono ſenſu dedit Chriſtus Petro poteſtatem faciendi de peccato non peccatum con. Barcla. ca. 31. Vide quæ ſupra allegavimus.*

(b) *Omnes Papæ à* Sylveſtro *ſecundo ad* Gregorium *ſeptimum incluſivè fuerunt Magi.* Platina.

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of their own Authors (a): And yet theſe too were infallible Doctors. And *Ludovicus Vives* dealt too hardly with poore *Bullardus* for ſaying *The better Grammarian, the worſe Divine* for here it ſeemes, The worſt Grammarians were the beſt, nay, the infallible Divines. All Hiſtories are full of the ambition, frauds, forgeries even of thoſe who were accounted ſome of the beſt of their Popes, to ſay nothing of more abhominable vices: Nor did this corruption reſt in the head but from thence diſpers it ſelfe into all the members, the Cardinals, Biſhops, Governours of the Romiſh Church: It was acknowledged by the Pope (and therefore infallibly true,) *Adrianus* the ſixth by the name of the Popes and prelates, *We have all turned after our own wayes, there is none that doth good, no not one* (b). The famous Chancellor of *Paris Gerſon* complaines that *Learned and godly Biſhops were choſen no where, but carnall men and ignorant of Spirituall things* (c). *And ſo proud* (ſaith he) *that they do not know themſelves to be men.* *Duarenus* ſpeaks home to this purpoſe: *Moſt of the Biſhops of our time are greater ſtrangers to Religion and Holy things then any of the ſecular Nobles, and they mind nothing but how to defend their poſſeſſions by right or wrong* (d). *Ferus* cries out: *Who doth not ſee the inſatiable*

(a) *Cum conſtet plures Papas adeo illiteratos eſſe ut Grammaticam penitus ignorent; quî fit ut Sacras literas interpretari poſſent* Alphonſus de Caſtro *con. Hereſes cap. 4. in editione An:* 1543.

(b) *Omnes nos declinavimus unuſquiſque in vias ſuas, nec fuit jamdiu qui faceret bonum, non fuit uſque ad unum.* *In inſtructionibus ad legatos* Norinbirga Anno 1525. (c) *Nullibi Epiſcopos bonos & opere ac Doctrinâ probatos eligi ſed homines carnales & Spiritualium ignaros —— prælatos adeo ſuperbos eſſe ut homines ſe neſciant.* *In declaratione defectuum Eccleſiaſt.* (d) *Plerique Epiſcopi noſtro tempore a religione & ſacris, quam quoſvis ſatrapas et principes profanos longe alieniores, nec aliud eis curæ eſſe quam ut ditiones et poſſeſſiones ſuas quo jure, quâve injuriâ tueantur* *De Sacro Miniſterio* lib. 1. cap. 4.

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avarice and impostures of the Popes and religious men? with these all things are vendible (a). And *Stella* informs us, *There were few possessors of Benefices who had them otherwise then either by begging, or paying for them* (b). And yet these were the good men of the Church of Rome, these are they who acted in Councels sincerely from love to God and his truth, not seeking their own things but the things of Christ, and therefore without doubt infallible. And for the state of Councels, take one testimony for all of one that was an eminent part and member of them, Cardinal *Julian*, who in his Epistle to *Engenius* the fourth in the councel of *Basil* in plain terms tels him, that *all Councels, since that of Chalcedon,* (which was above a thousand years ago) *were instituted, not for the discovery of truth, but for the defence and increase of the power of the Romane Church, and the liberty of Churchmen* (c).

Should I descend to particulars, and open the several impostures and palpable frauds, which the Popes and their Partisans have successively used in the packing of councels, and making voices, and forging decrees, and ingaging the Bishops by hopes, and fears, and interests, to give up their votes and consciences to the advancement of the Romish power and magnificence, I should engage my self to transcribe whole volumes, and cut out work for the whole terme of my life; The transactions of the councel of *Trent* are fresh in memory. And he that shall peruse the words of their own Historians, the Pro-

(a) *Quis Sacerdotum ac Religiosorum & Pontificum inexplebilem avaritiam & impostura non videt? apud hos omnia venalia sunt.* In Joh. 2. (b) *Pauci sunt Beneficiarii nisi aut prece aut pretio.* In Luc. 21.

(c) *Omnia Concilia post Chalcedonense potissimum instituta fuerunt, non ut everteretur veritas, sed ut roboraretur, defenderetur, atque augeretur semper Ecclesiæ Romanæ potestas, & Ecclesiasticorum libertas.* Æneas Sylvius lib. 2. de gestis Concil. Basil.

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teſtations of Princes, the Cenſures of Univerſities relating to it &c. will eaſily be ſatisfied, whether *Clara's non conſtat de oppoſito* be true or no. And therefore notwithſtanding this frivolous excuſe it remaines a truth, that according to the principles of Papiſts themſelves, and becauſe of thoſe evident defects in them acknowledged by their own Authors, whatever Councels regularly called and ordered may pretend to, their councels muſt lay down their claime to Infallibility; and ſo their faith hath no ſolid foundation, as not in the Pope's authority, ſo not in Scripture, nor in the teſtimony of the Fathers, nor yet in the infallibility of general councels. And therefore I may ſafely conclude, they have no ſolid foundation for their Faith.

26. There is only one thing which may ſeem to retard the paſſing of the ſentence: that is this. That although each of theſe taken aſunder may not be ſufficient, yet all put together make a cord which is not eaſily broken, *Quæ non proſunt ſingula, juncta juvant*: and therefore, foraſmuch as the Church ſtands upon four Pillars, Authority of Scriptures, Tradition of Fathers, Infallibility of Councels, and the Pope, their Faith is like Mount Sion that cannot be removed. And if it be deemed an abſurd and unreaſonable thing (as we poor fallible creatures have thought) to prove the Scriptures from the authority of the Church, Councels, or Pope, and circularly to prove the authority of the Church, Councels, or Pope from the Scripture. The Jeſuits have found out the Quadrature of the Circle, and they tell you, that it is no more abſurd that Scripture ſhould lean upon the Churches authority, and the Church on the authority of Scripture, then that St. John the Baptiſt ſhould give teſtimony to Chriſt, and Chriſt to him again; or that the Old Teſtament ſhould be confirmed by the New, and the New Teſtament by the Old. This is one of their laſt pleas: we find them now retired

retired to their Fort-royal, beat them out of this, and upon the matter all is loſt: and truly that will be no hard matter to do, if the Reader pleaſe to conſider 1. The great diſparity of the alledged Inſtances. *John* and *Chriſt* might give teſtimony one to another, but neither of them did ſimply depend upon each other's teſtimonies: ſuppoſing that Chriſt had given no expreſs teſtimony concerning *John*, yet I ſay the miſſion of *John* was not only true in it ſelf, but ſufficiently evident to the Jews, as plainly appears from hence: That the Phariſees, when asked by Chriſt, whether the Baptiſme of *John* was from Heaven or of men, were afraid to deny its Heavenly original, as being againſt the common ſentiment of the Jewes: and Chriſt chargeth the Phariſees with *rejecting the counſel of God againſt themſelves, being not baptized of John*, Luk. 7. 30. And much more true is it of Chriſt, that he did not depend upon the teſtimony of John, but had other and better teſtimony, Ioh. 5. 36. *But I have greater teſtimony then that of Iohn.* And it is enough for my purpoſe, if either Chriſt or John had an authority independent upon the others evidence, though the other had not. And the like may be ſaid of the Old and New Teſtament: well may they give teſtimony one to another, for neither of them doth totally depend upon the other. The Old Teſtament did ſufficiently evidence its authority, before ever the New Teſtament was written; and the New Teſtament too did carry other convincing evidences of its divine original and authority, beſides the teſtimony of the Old Teſtament: ſuch as the voice from Heaven, *This is my well beloved Son*, 2 Pet. 1. 17. and the glorious miracles he did, Ioh. 5. 36. *The works that I do bear witneſs of me, that the Father hath ſent me:* the holineſs of his life, power of his doctrine, patience of his death. But now (to apply this to our preſent purpoſe) it is here far otherwiſe: for the Scripture (ſay they) doth not evidence it

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ſelf any other way to us but by the Churches teſtimony, (as we have heard from their own words:) and Councels, Fathers, and the Pope (we ſay, and have proved) cannot evidence their Authority and Infallibility any other way but by the Scripture, (which according to their principles is impoſſible) or by their own Teſtimony, which is ridiculous.

2. Let it be conſidered, that the Romaniſts do not make theſe four, Scripture, Fathers, Councels, and Popes coordinate and collateral foundations of their Faith, as if each of them did contribute a diſtinct and independent ſupport unto the Romiſh Faith; but indeed they make one of them totally to depend upon another, and at laſt reduce them all to one, and (to ſpeak properly) to none. For the Fathers, and Councels, and the ſplendid name of the Church, however they are pretended to put a fair gloſſe upon a foul cauſe, yet indeed the authority of them all is as vigorouſly diſputed againſt by the moſt and learned'ſt Romaniſts, as by any Proteſtants in the world. You remember, what their great maſter *Bellarmine* told you, *That Infallibility and ſupreme Authority is not partly in the Pope, partly in the Councel, but wholly in the Pope:* what need we trouble our ſelves further? Thoſe four are now reduc'd to two, Scripture and the Pope; and thoſe two muſt mutually prove one another. There is no ſolid and ſufficient ground for me to believe the Scriptures, but the teſtimony of the Pope, ſay the Papiſts; and there is no ſolid and ſufficient ground for me to believe the Authority and Infallibility of the Pope, but the teſtimony of the Scriptures: For the Fathers and Councels receiving all their authority and infallibility from the Pope, cannot give him the infallibility and authority they received from him: Now how ſenſleſſe a reſolution of Faith this is (though moſt of the Papiſts have no better and no other) you may perceive by ſome few inſtances. It is as

if a Sudent ſhould ſay thus: I ſhould not believe ſuch a book to be an excellent book, but for my Tutor's teſtimony, who tels me ſo. And again: I ſhould not believe my Tutor's teſtimony to be of any validity, but for the teſtimony of that book concerning him. Who would not laugh at ſuch an aſſertion? Or as if a man ſhould ſay: I ſhould not believe the honeſty of *Richard*, were it not for the teſtimony of *Thomas*. And I ſhould not believe the honeſty of *Thomas*, were it not for the teſtimony of *Richard*. Where is there a man that will accept of ſuch ſecurity in a trivial worldly bargain? And yet the Papiſts are content to venture their ſouls upon it. From all that hath been ſaid, I conclude, that the pretended authorities we have diſcourſed of, do neither ſeverally nor yet jointly afford a ſolid foundation for a Papiſt's Faith, nor prove that Infallibility which they pretend to; and conſequently, there is no ſolid foundation for a Papiſts faith. And here I might diſcharge my ſelf from further trouble, having diſcovered the nullity of all the pretences which have been hitherto owned by the Church of *Rome*.

CHAP. V.

Of Orall Tradition, and the Teſtimony of the preſent Church.

§. 1. BUt becauſe I am reſolved to do their cauſe all the right that may be, and give them all the favourable allowance they can deſire, I ſhall conſider the ſingular conceits of their private Doctors, where the authors are any whit conſiderable, and their opinion hath any thing of plauſibility. There is then another ſhift, which ſome ſubtle Romaniſts have lately invented, who perceiving how their brethren have been beaten out of the

the field by ſtrength of Scripture and argument, in their conceit about the infallibility of the Pope or Councel, come in for their ſuccour with an Univerſal Tradition, and the authority of the preſent Church. This is the way of *Ruſhworth* in his Dialogues, Mr. *White*, and *Holden*, and Sr. *Kenelm Digby*, and S. *Clara*. Their defence and diſcourſe is this, for I ſhall give you their opinion in their own words. *A man may prudently believe the preſent Church for her ſelf, and ought ſo to do: A man needs not, nor is not obliged to enquire further; —there he may ſafely fix,* (a) ſaith *S. Clara*. Thus the L. *Faulkland's* Adverſary: *That ſociety of Chriſtians, which alone pretend to teach nothing but what they have received from their Fathers, and they from theirs, and ſo from the Apoſtles, they muſt needs hold the truth which firſt was delivered: for if they could teach falſehoods, then ſome age muſt either have erred in underſtanding their Anceſtors, or have joyned to deceive their poſterity, neither of which is credible. But the Church of Rome, and they only, pretend to teach nothing elſe &c. Ergo they muſt needs hold the truth.* The acute Mr. White explains the opinion more exactly and fully, and the ſtrength of his and their notion I ſhall give you in his words.

1. *The nations did underſtand the doctrine taught by the Apoſtles, and practiſed it, and highly valued it, as moſt neceſſary for them and their poſterity, and to be preferred before all other things.*

2. *Thoſe firſt Chriſtians even at their death, both could and would, and therefore doubtleſſe did moſt vehemently commend this doctrine to their Children: and the Fathers did alwaies deliver the ſame doctrine which they received from*

(a) *Prudenter Eccleſiæ præſenti propter ſeipſam credi poteſt & debet, h.e. —non eſt opus, nec obligatur homo ad inquirendum ulterius, ibi tutò ſiſti poteſt. Syſtem. fidei c.* 10. *ubi diſertè aſſerit teſtimonium præſentis Eccleſiæ eſſe infallibile.*

their Parents, and under that notion becauſe they had received it.

3. *If any delivered another doctrine, he could be proved a lyar by the reſt of the world; or if all ſhould agree againſt their conſciences to deliver a new doctrine, under that notion* (ſcil. of a doctrine delivered from their Parents) *that whole age would be guilty of treachery and parricide, and ſhould agree to murder themſelves, which is impoſſible.*

4. *There was a perpetual ſucceſſion of Paſtors, who took care of Faith and manners; and it is evident, that the Paſtors and people had the ſame faith.*

5. *And there aroſe hereſies, by which the truth might be more cleared, and they that maintained the antient doctrine might be diſtinguiſhed from Innovators: which Innovaters did not publickly reject the Apoſtles doctrine, but pleaded it was not rightly underſtood, and the other part kept the name of the Catholick Church.*

6. *It is neceſſary, that that congregation, which alwaies kept the antient diſcipline, ſhould alone profeſs that ſhe received her opinions from Chriſt by perpetual ſucceſſion, and that ſhe neither did nor could receive any thing into the Canon of their Faith under another notion.*

7. *As certainly therefore, as one may know, that the congregation of believers, which at this day is called Catholick, is animated with a number of learned and wiſe men, ſo certainly will it be known, that ſhe is not conſcious of any newneſs of doctrine, and therefore there is no new doctrine.*

8. *Following ages cannot be ignorant, what former ages believed about thoſe things which are explained in Sermons, Catechiſms, Prayers, and Sacraments, and ſuch are all things neceſſary to the Catholick Faith.*

9. *This doctrine delivered from hand to hand was confirmed by long cuſtome, diverſe laws, rewards and puniſhments both of this and the following life, monuments of writers, by which all would be kept in it.*

10. *Following Rulers could not change the doctrine of their Predeceſſors without ſchiſme, and notorious tumult in the Church, as dayly experience proveth* (a). To the ſame

(a) 1. Gentes intelligebant, quòd Apoſtoli docuerunt, & opere complebant, eamq; doctrinam magni æſtimabant, & ſummè neceſſariam ſibi & poſteris ſuis & cæteris omnibus negotiis præponendam. 2. Illi ergo primi Chriſtiani doctrinam iſtam filiis & ſucceſſoribus & potuerunt & voluerunt, etiam morientes, enixiſſimè commendare, ideòque indubiè hoc fecerunt. Et patres filiis eandem doctrinam ſemper tradiderunt, quam ipſimet acceperant à majoribus, & eo titulo credebant quia acceperant. 3. Si quiſquam aliam (doctrinam) traderet, mendacii à reliquo orbe convinceretur, vel ſi omnes novam conarentur eo titulo tradere, conſcientiâ teſte, perfidiæ & parricidii tota illa ætas condemnaretur, & veluti ad ſe occidendos conſpirarent, quod impoſſibile eſt. 4. Paſtores perpetuò ſucceſſerunt, qui curam fidei & morum gererent; (conſtat autem quòd populi & paſtorum una fuit fides, una doctrina. *Idem trac.* 2. §5. *pag.* 114.) 5. Et hæreſeo tæ ſunt quibus veritas magis eluceſceret, & diſtingueretur retinores doctrinæ antiquæ contra novatores. Qui quidem novatores non palam averſabantur doctrinam Apoſtolorum, ſed eſſe malè intellectam contendebant. Reliquæ autem parti manſit nomen Catholicæ Eccleſiæ. 6. Neceſſe eſt autem eam fidelium congregationem, quæ ſemper antiquæ diſciplinæ tenax erat, ſolam profiteri ſe à Chriſto per ſucceſſionem perpetuam dogmata ſua accepiſſe, nec quicquam aliotitulo recipiſſe in fidei Canonem, neque unquam recipere poſſe. 7. Quantâ itaque certitudine quiſquam agnoſcere poteſt congregationem illam fidelium, quæ hodie Catholica dicitur, eſſe virorum prudentium & doctorum multitudine animatam, tantâ certitudine ipſi conſtabit eam non eſſe conſciam ſibi de aliqua doctrinæ novitate, ideoq; nullam eſſe novitatem. 8. Nullo modo poteſt latere ſuccedanea ſæcula, quid præeuntia crediderint circa ea quæ concionibus, catechеſibus, orationibus, & ſacramentis exponuntur: talia autem ſint univerſa ad fidem Catholicam neceſſaria. 9. Confirmata erat hæc doctrina per manus tradita longâ conſuetudine, variis legibus, præmiis & pœnis tum hujus tum ſequentis vitæ, ſcriptorum monumentis, quibus omnes in ea retinerentur. *Thomas Anglus in ſoao buccinæ, De fi. et theol. tract.* 1 *parag.* 4. & 5. 10. Rectores ſucceedanei non poterant deceſſoris doctrinam immutare abſque ſchiſmate, & notorio Eccleſiæ tumultu, ut quotidiana experientia comprobat. *De fide & Theol. tract.* 2. *parag.* 3.

purpoſe alſo *Holden* diſcourſeth in his Treatiſe *of the reſolution of Faith.* This is a new Plea, and deſerves ſpecial conſideration.

§. 2. For Anſwer, 1. I give Mr. *White* and his worthy Partners humble thanks for the great favour or rather juſtice done by them to the Proteſtant cauſe. For, whereas this is the perplexing queſtion, wherewith they think to puzzle us, How we can know the Scriptures to be the word of God without the Churches infallible authority? and from the ſuppoſed impoſſibility thereof, they infer the neceſſity of the Churches authority: theſe kind-hearted Gentlemen have helped us out of the bryars: for now it ſeems, and it is a truth, and ſo far the argument from Tradition is really concluſive, that we may know the Scripture to be the word of God without the Churches infallible authority, viz. by tradition. And the argument of Tradition would not at all loſe its ſtrength if the Church were wholly ſtript of the capacity of a Judg, and retained only the qualification of a witneſſe, and conſequently the Churches authority is not at all neceſſary. And if the Church ſhould boaſt of her authority againſt or above tradition, it may be ſaid to her according to theſe mens principles, as the Apoſtle ſaid to the Gentiles, Rom. 11. *If thou boaſt, thou bear'ſt not Tradition, but Tradition thee,* for ſo ſay theſe Doctors. Mr. *White* ſpends one entire chapter upon the proof of this Propoſition, *That the ſucceſſion of doctrine is the only rule of Faith*(a), and ſaith, *that whether we place this infallibility in the whole body of the Church, or in Councels, or in Scriptures, in each of theſe their authority is reſolved into and all depends upon Tradition*(b). And he ſpends ſeveral chapters to ſhew,

(a) *De fide et Theol. tract. 2, Parag. 18.*

(b) *Sive infallibilitatem in corpore Eccleſiæ—ſtatueris, firmitas & poſſeſſio doctrinæ, quam habet eſt traditio; ſive in Conciliis,—ſive in Scripturis, earum authoritas in traditionem reſolvitur. De fide & Theol. tract 2, parag. 18.*

that

that *neither the Pope, nor Councels can give any solidity, or certainty to our Faith but what they have from Tradition:* If it be said Tradition is conveyed to us by the Church, and so there is still a necessity of her Authority. I answer plainly no: It followes onely that there is necessity of her Ministery, but not of her Authority. A Proclamation of the King and Councel could not come to my hands, (If I live at *Yorke*) but by a Messenger, and by the Scribe, or Printer: But if any from this necessity of his Ministery infer his Authority, I may well deny the consequence; but because it is unhansome to extenuate a courtesie, I hold my self obliged further to acknowledge the great kindnesse of our Adversaries, who not contented to assert the validity of the Protestants foundation of Faith have also overturned their own, which that you may the better understand, I shall briefly represent to you the sweet Harmony of those *Cadmean* Brethren, and how God hath confounded the language of *Babels* Builders: so that they have little to do, but to stand still, and see the Salvation of God while these *Midianites*, and *Amalekites* thrust their Swords in one anothers sides.

The opinion and language of most Papists in the world is this. That *Tradition is therefore only infallible because it is delivered to us by the Church which is infallible:* (a) If you ask *Bellarmine* what it is by which I am assured that a tradition is right, he answers, *because* the whole Church, which receives it cannot erre. (b) So the late

(a) *Labyrinthus Cantuariensis p.* 68.

(b) *Quando universa Ecclesia aliquid servat, vel aliquid tanquam fidei Dogma amplectitur quod non est Scriptum, necesse est dicere ab Apostolis traditum. Ratio est quia cum Ecclesia universa errare non possit. 1. Tim. 3. & certe quod Ecclesia de fide esse credit, sine dubio est de fide: De verbo Dei lib. 4. cap. 9.*

Answerer of Bishop *Laud*. *There is no means left to believe any thing with a divine infallible Faith, if the Authority of the Catholick Church be rejected as erronious, and fallible, for who can believe either Creed, or Scripture, or unwritten Tradition, but upon her Authority.* (a) Nay, S: *Clara* himself notwithstanding his Romantick strain: That Tradition and the naked *Testimony of the present* Church *is sufficient*, yet elsewhere confesseth the Churches infallibility must necessarily be supposed to make my Faith certain: His words are these: *The Testimony of the Church by whith Traditions come to us, is infallible, from a Divine Revelation, because it is evident from the Scripture that the Church is infallible*: And presently after, *If the Church were not infallibile, it could not produce in me an infallible Faith*, (b) And this was the constant Doctrine of the Romish Masters in all former Ages: Now come a new Generation who finding the Notion of infallibility hard beset, and that Pillar shaken, they support their cause with a quite cotrary position: *That it is not the Churches infallibility that renders Tradition infallible* (as their former Masters held) *but the infallibility of Tradition that makes the Church infallible*, and therefore they say; *the Church her self is no further infallible then she followes Tradition*. Thus Mr *White* plainly tells us that *Councels are not infallible, because the speciall assistance of Gods spirit makes them infallible, but because by irrefragable testimony*

(a) *In Lauds Labyrinth: ch. 2. pag. 17.* (b) *Dico secundo quod testimonium Ecclesiæ per quod nobis illæ veritates (traditæ) innotescunt infallibile est, nempe ob revelationem divinam: quia manifestè habemus in Scripturis, Ecclesiam esse infallibilem —— si igitur illa (Authoritas Ecclesiæ) non esset infallibilis, non produceretur in nobis fides infallibilis Systema fidei c. 10. Num. 3. non quia speciali spiritus sancti instinctu infallibilitas iis affletur, sed quia irrefragabili testimonio successionem Doctrinæ roborant —— & sunt irrecusabiles testes traditionis, pro iis decertandum est. De fide & Theol tract. 2. Parag. 21.*

they

they confirm the ſucceſſion of their Doctrines, and are ſuch witneſſes of tradition as cannot be refuſed.

Thus *Holden* having told us *that the Popes infallibility is controverted on both ſides by juſt, godly, and moſt learned Catholicks, as well antient, as modern, and neither ſide condemned by Authentick cenſure* (a) (which by the way diſcourſes the deſparateneſſe of the greateſt part of the Romiſh Church at this day which ventures their Soules, and reſt their faith upon what themſelves confeſſe to be a doubtfull foundation, *viz.* the Popes infallibility) (b) *All Divines* (ſaith he) *confeſſe it is not certain with a Divine, and a Catholick Faith,* he comes to lay down this concluſion that the *Infallibility of the Church is not from any Priviledge granted to the Romans ſea, or S. Peters ſucceſſour but from the univerſall and Catholick tradition of the Church* (c) and Councels fare no better then Popes. *They are* (ſaith he) *not Founders, but only Guardians, and Witneſſes of revealed truths* (d) ſo Mr *White* allowes neither Pope nor Councels any infallibility, but what they have from tradition, as wee have ſeen, and tels us in expreſſe termes, that *Tradition is overthrown, if any other principle*

(a) *An ſummorum Pontificum decreta ſint ex inſtitutione Chriſti ab omni errore libera* —— *hæc inquam, in utramq; partem ventilata videmus a piiſſimis quam plurimis & doctiſſimis Catholicis Authoribus tam antiquioribus, quam retentioribus quorum neutram partam audivimus unquam fuiſſe cenſuris aliquibus authenticis prohibitam aut improbatam: Quapropter evidentiſſime conſtat Catholicum neminem aſtringi aut huic aut alteri parti adhærere tanquam fidei Catholicæ & Divinæ articulo* —— *De reſolut. fidei lib. 2. c. 1. p. 174.* (b) *Nec opus eſt, meo judicio, divinam infallibilitatem Romanæ ſedi annectere (quod omnes Theologi agnoſcunt non eſſe divina & Catholica fide certum) Id ib. p. 178.* (c) *Eccleſiæ infallibilitas non Privilegio aliquo aut ſedi Romanæ, aut S. Petri ſucceſſori divinitus impartito* —— *ſed univerſæ & Catholicæ traditioni Eccleſiæ* —— *præcipuè tribuenda eſt: Idem ib. p. 174* (d) *Epiſcopi in Conſiliis ſunt tantummodo Cuſtodes, ac Teſtes veritatum revelatarum, non autem conditores* Holden *lib. 1. c. 9. p. 153.*

be

be added to it: for here lies the solidity of Tradition that nothing is accepted by the Church but from Tradition (a).

§. 3. Well, what shall the poor unlearned Romanist do, that finds his great masters at variance in the very foundation of his Faith: Here are two contradictory assertions: one of them must unavoidably be false: A man may with probability at least assert the falshood of either of them, having the suffrage of diverse of their own most learned Catholick Authors for him in either opinion; but whether they be true or false, their cause is lost: 1. If they be true, and 1. If that be true, that Tradition be the foundation of the Churches Infallibility: then 1. Whence hath Tradition this Infallibility? From Scripture? That they utterly disclaime. From Tradition? Then why may not Scripture give Testimony to it self as well as Tradition? And whence hath that Tradition its Infallibility? and so in infinitum. Is it from the reason of the thing? So Mr White implies who attempts to prove it by a rationall and Logicall Discourse; but himself hath prevented that, while he saith *To leane upon Logicall inferences is to place the foundation of our Faith and the Church in the sand* (b). And *S. Clara* gives a check to this: *It is more reasonable and wise, even for the most learned and acute persons to rely upon the Authority of the Church then to adhere to our own reasonings how plausible soever* (c). And that is largely disproved in

(a) *Everititur traditio, si aliud fidei principium ei addatur. Inde enim est traditionis firmitas quod nihil nisi ex ea ab Ecclesia accepetur. De fide & Theol. lib. 2. parag. 18.*

(b) *Logicis uti ratiunculis, est fidei & Ecclesiæ fundamina in Sabulo collocare ubi supra tract. 2. parag. 18.* (c) *Dico igitur quod rationabilius & sapientius est, etiam respectu Doctissimorum & acutissimorum hominum, Authoritati Ecclesiæ, quam ratiunculis nostris licet apparentissimis adhærere: System. fidei cap. 12. n. 9.*

the

the following diſcourſe. Is it then from the Churches Infallibility? This they deny and allow the Church no infallibility independent upon Tradition.

2. Seeing they grant the Church may erre, if ſhe receed from Tradition I can never be ſure ſhe doth not erre unleſſe I be ſure ſhe keep to Tradition: And therefore I muſt examine that, and judge of it, and ſo private men are made judges of controverſies, which they ſo much dread.

3. Hereby the Authority of the Pope and generall Councels of Biſhops is rendred unneceſſary: I prove it thus: If theſe be neceſſary onely as witneſſes to Tradition, then their Authority is not neceſſary: For it is not Authority, but knowledge and fidelity which renders a witneſſe competent: A lay hearer of S. *Paul* may be as competent a witneſſe of the Doctrine he heard S. *Paul* Preach, as a Biſhop, ſuppoſing a parity in their knowledg, fidelity, and converſe with the Apoſtle, and another Biſhop may be as competent a witneſſe as the Biſhop of Rome and conſequently as Infallible, and any congregation of diſcreet and pious Chriſtians who heard S. *Peter* Preach are as infallible witneſſes as the Church of Rome, and if there were a generall aſſembly of lay men of equall knowledge and experience, they are as infallible witneſſes what the Faith of the next precedent age was, and what the Faith of the preſent Church is, as a Councell of Biſhops: Nay (to ſpeak truth) they are more credible witneſſes, becauſe leſſe byaſſed by intereſt affection or prejudice. Theſe rocks the firſt branch throwes them upon.

2. If they flie from this and make the Churches infallibility the foundation of Traditions (as the moſt Papiſts do) then they muſt demonſtrate that Infallibility from Scripture, Fathers, or Councels, which we have ſeen, they cannot do. So that, if either of their poſitions be true, their cauſe is loſt.

But

But 2. If either of them be falſe, they are gone too: For if tradition be not Infallible in it ſelfe without the Churches Authority (as the one ſide ſaith) then the Papiſts have no certaine rule for the Church to ſteere its courſe by (for the Scriptures they do not own as ſuch) and if the Church be not infallible, but by vertue of this Tradition (as the other ſide ſaith,) then they confeſſe the inſufficiency of all their proofes from Scripture and from the Authority of Fathers and Councels, and their Authority is no more, then that of any faithfull or credible Hiſtorian, and inſtead of a Divine the Papiſts have nothing but an Hiſtoricall faith. I ſhall conclude this firſt Anſwer with one ſyllogiſme from the words and aſſertions of Mr *White*: *Tradition is overthrown, if another principle of Faith be added to it:* But the moſt and Learnedeſt Doctours of the Romiſh Church do adde another principle to it, *viz.* the Churches Authority and infallibility as I ſhewed from their own words: *Ergo*, either Tradition and all this new deviſe, or the Authority of the Romiſh Church is overthrown.

4. *Anſw.* 2. This new conceit directly thwarts the deſigne of God in the Writing of the Scripture, and indeed the common ſence and experience of all mankind: for hereby a verball Tradition is made a more ſure way of conveyance to poſterity then a Writing. It hath been the Wiſdome of God in former ages to take care that thoſe things might be Written, which he would have kept in remembrance. Exod. 17. 14. *Write this for a memorial in a Book.* So little did God truſt this (now ſuppoſed infallible) way of orall Tradition, that he would not venture the Decalogue upon it (though the words were but few, and the importance of them ſo conſiderable, both in truth, and in the apprehenſions of the Jewes, that if Mr *White's* Argument have any ſtrength in it, it was impoſſible poſterity ſhould ever miſtake it) but write

write it with his own finger once and againe after the breaking of the firſt Tables: And although, whileſt the Church was confined to a few families and divine revelations were frequently renewed a verball Tradition was ſufficient, yet when the Church came to be multiplyed and eſpecially when it comes to be diſperſed into all Nations and Revelations ceaſe, then Writing proves of abſolute neceſſity: How farre the firſt and wiſeſt Chriſtians were from Mr *Whites* opinion appeares from hence, that not daring to leane upon the broken reed of Orall Tradition, they did earnely deſire the Apoſtles to commit their Doctrines to Writing. *Euſebius* reports that St *Peters* hearers were not content with this way of Tradition from *Peters* mouth, but (for want of Mr *VVhites* preſence there to convince them of their folly,) *They earneſtly begged it of* Marke *that he would leave them that Doctrine in VVriting which they had received by word of mouth* (a). And *Hierome* tels us *That* St John *the Evangeliſt was almoſt forced to write by all the Biſhops of* Aſia (b): who (it ſeems) were raw novices that did not underſtand their Catechiſme nor the firſt principle in it *viz.* The ſufficiency and infallibility of orall Tradition. And St *Luke* gives it us under his hand (not fearing either Mr *VVhites* anger or his Argument) that he wrote his Goſpell *ad majorem ἀσφάλειαν* that Chriſtians might have the greater certainty *Luk.* 1 3,4. When *Job* deſires the perpetuall continuance of his words he wiſheth, *O that my words were now VVritten! Oh that they were Printed in a Book!* Job. 19. 23. And *David* in the ſame caſe

(a) *A Marco multis & variis precibus contendebant, ut monumentum illud doctrinæ, quod ſermone & verbo illis tradidiſſet, etiam Scriptis mandatum apud eos relinqueret. Hiſtor. lib. 2. cap. 14.* (b) *Johannes ab Aſiæ Epiſcopis penè omnibus coactus eſt ad ſcribendum Præfat. in Evang. Matt.*

would

would not rely upon Tradition, but takes this courſe for aſſurance: *This ſhall be written for the generation to come*, Pſal. 102. 18. But becauſe Mr *White* undoubtedly is a better Philoſopher and Divine then either *Luke* or *Job* or *David* were, (and therefore good reaſon they ſhould all vaile to his more penetrating wit and deeper judgment) he ſhall do well to remember that God himſelfe was of the ſame judgment—*Go, write it before them in a Table and note it in a Book, that it may be for the time to come for ever* Iſa. 30. 8. And to this agrees the common experience of mankind: *Vox audita perit, litera, ſcripta manet* verball Traditions, quickly vaniſh, onely writings are durable: Hence thoſe famous Lawes of *Lycurgus*, inſtitutes of the *Druides* Philoſophy of *Pythagoras* are upon the matter wholly loſt and onely ſome few fragments reſerved, becauſe not committed to writing: but this will be put out of doubt by reflecting upon the Hiſtory of mankind, whereby the aierineſſe of this phantaſme will be diſcovered, and the great difference between Tradition and writing in point of certainty demonſtrated: *Adam* and *Noah* the two ſucceſſive heads of mankind did doubtleſſe deliver the true Doctrine to their poſterity with the ſame important circumſtances, (which Mr *White* ſuppoſeth in the Doctrine of the Goſpell) as a Doctrine of everlaſting conſequence, and they ſo received it, and for a ſeaſon tranſmitted it to their Children: But alas! how ſoon was all obliterated, and in this ſenſe all mankind (ſome very few excepted) did agree to murther themſelves, and they actually did that which Mr *White* ſaith was impoſſible: And ſo from hence forward let all Logitians take notice of it, that *Ab eſſe ad poſſe non valet conſequentia.* Well, ſome centuries after comes *Moſes* and by Gods command delivers a Law in Writing and this law abides, and the Jewes to this day retaine it in remembrance and veneration

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ration and for above 3000 years together have been thereby kept from thoſe Pagan opinions and Idolatries which all the Scholars of Tradition almoſt in the whole World have fallen into: and conſequently writing is a ſure; and orall Tradition, an unſafe and uncertaine way of conveyance: and this principle hath had univerſall influence upon the actions of wiſe men, in all ages, and in all things: Hence care hath been alwaies taken for the writing of Canons of Councels, decrees of Courts, Acts of Parliament (though the importance of them were many times ſo great and evident, that according to this new notion, writing was ſuperfluous, and verball Tradition Infallible:) And if thoſe wiſe men durſt never truſt unwritten Tradition with their eſtates and worldly concernments, ſhall we be ſo mad as to venture our Souls upon it? Let Papiſts do ſo, who having given up their conſciences to the Pope cannot ſay their ſoules are their own, but let them not be diſpleaſed, if we deſire to make a wiſer bargaine. But our Engliſh Apoſtate hath a diſtinction to ſalve this groſſe abſurdity: *It is true* (ſaith he) *of Doctrines meerly ſpeculative, that the memory is not ſo ſafe a depoſitory as VVritten records, but not of ſuch as may be made as it were viſible by practiſe:* And he is pleaſed to give us an inſtance in the *Doctrine of the Sacrament and Chriſts reall unfigurative preſence in it, which* (ſaith he) *was more ſecurely and clearly delivered by the Churches practiſe, then could be by books VVritten, their proſtrations and adorations demonſtrated their aſſurance of his real preſence, where every mans ſaying Amen at the Prieſts pronouncing* Corpus Domini noſtri Jeſu Chriſti, *expreſſed their confeſſion of that preſence with excluſion of all tropes and figures in the buſineſſe. Exomol.* §. 1. c. 8. And are theſe the great and viſible aſſurances of Doctrines to which all the ſecurity of Writings muſt ſtrike ſaile? Are theſe grounds ſo evident that the Doctrines could not poſſibly have been

been more ſecurely propagated and more clearly and intelligibly delivered to poſterity in Writing as *Creſsy* daringly aſſerts? See *Exomolog. Sect.* 1. *chap.* 8. O the beſotting nature of Popery! O the tremendous judgment of God puniſhing Apoſtacy with an ἀδόκιμος νοῦς a reprobate ſence! Dare this miſerable man ſay theſe are clearer evidences of the reall preſence then if it had been ſaid *in terminis*. This is my body in a proper and corporeall ſence, or this bread is converted into the very ſubſtance of this body which you now ſee? Theſe men may well ſay what they pleaſe for it appeares they can believe what they liſt.

May I with the Readers leave in few words, diſcover the ſhamefull weakneſſe and horrid impudence of this aſſertion: Is it true indeed that the proſtrations and adorations, of Chriſtians diſcover'd their aſſurance of the reall corporall preſence? And of all men living could Mr *Creſſy* ſay this, who had ſo oft ſeen others receive and himſelf received the Sacrament in *England* and *Ireland* in a poſture of adoration *viz.* kneeling, with an aſſurance of the falſhood of that opinion of the reall corporall preſence? Why might not the ſpeciall yet ſpirituall preſence of Chriſt in the Sacrament occaſion this proſtration, as well as the ſpeciall and Spirituall preſence of God in the Arke occaſioned the Jewes to fall down and worſhip at his footſtoole? And muſt the poore Clarke come in with his Amen to help the lame prieſt over the ſtile? Why there is not a Proteſtant but when he heares theſe words pronounced this is my body will ſay his Amen to it, and acknowledge it ſo to be, but ſtill Chriſts words muſt be taken in Chriſts ſence, and that is, though figurative yet very frequent in ſuch caſes: In ſhort, ſince theſe are the practicall viſible Arguments alledged as inſtances of the Infallible certainty of orall Tradition, above all that can be ſaid in writing: I hope the Reader (who concernes

cernes himſelfe either in matters of credit or conſcience) will eaſily diſcerne and ingeniouſly confeſſe, both the abſurdity of their Arguments and aſſertion, and the ſolidity of this ſecond Anſwer, and the advantage of writing above unwritten Tradition.

§. 5. *Anſ.* 3. If this aſſertion be true and ſolid, and Tradition be an Infallible foundation of Faith as thoſe men pretend no errour could come into the Church under pretence of Tradition from the Apoſtles: That is evident in it ſelfe (elſe an infallible Authoritie is liable to error which is a contradiction) and it is granted by our Adverſaries, who therefore tell us that all Hereticks recede from the Tradition of their Fathers and broach new and unheard of Doctrines, as we have ſeen.

But errors may come into the Church under pretence of Tradition. Here all the doubt lies, and therefore I ſhall indeavour to make it good, a taske which would be wholly ſuperfluous if the impudence of our Adverſaries, and the deſperateneſſe of their cauſe did not oblige them to require, and us to give the proofe of the moſt evident verities: I might inſiſt upon the Doctrine of the *Chiliaſts* (which the Papiſts confeſſe to be falſe) which was commended to the Church by *Papias* and *Irenæus* too as an Apoſtolicall Tradition, and ſo received by the generality of Orthodox Chriſtians (ſaith *Juſtin Martyr:*) This Argument is renderd more conſiderable by the pitifull evaſion wherewith Mr *VVhite* ſhuffles it off, ſaying, *That the Chiliaſts were deceaved by* Cerinthus *who feigned he had this from the Apoſtles in private diſcourſes, not in publike Preaching* (a). For (to ſay nothing of this that the Fathers derive its pedegree from another root) whatever was the occaſion and ground of this mi-

(a) *De fide et Theolog. tract.* 1. §. 7. *p.* 20.

ſtake in that Tradition it ſufficiently proves what I intend *viz.* that many or moſt of the guides of the Church may receive falſe Doctrines as comming from the Apoſtles, and ſo tranſmit them to their Poſterity, which is the thing now denied. It was an old Obſervation of *Irenæus* concerning the Hereticks of his time (one would think the words were not onely Hiſtoricall of them, but alſo propheticall of the Papiſts) *When Hereticks are reproved out of the Scripture, they begin to accuſe the Scripture, as if truth could not be diſcovered by thoſe that know not Tradition*(a).(b)The *Arrians* pretended they had their Doctrine by Tradition from their Anceſtors: particularly they named *Origen*, *Dionyſius Alexandrinus*, and *Lucian* the Martyr by whoſe hands their Doctrine had been conveyed to them, as *Baronius* acknowledgeth. *Epiphanius* tels us the *Cajani* pretended St *Paul* as the Author and founder of their Hereticall Doctrines: The *Pelagians* boaſted of their Doctrine, *That it had been alwaies celebrated by the Learning of Holy men* (b). The Doctrine of rebaptiſation (which the Papiſts acknowledge to be erroneous) was brought in by *Cyprian* and the *African* Biſhops under a pretence of Tradition: The words of *Cyprian* are theſe: *We do not now breach a new Doctrine, but one long ſince decreed by our Predeceſſors* (c). It is true *Pamelius* ſaith he meanes this of his immediate Predeceſſors *Agrippinus*, and the reſt: and that will ſerve my turne, if Mr *VVhites* Argument will hold: for then no

(a) *Cum ex Scripturis arguuntur hæretici, in accuſationem convertuntur Scripturarum, quia non poſſit ex his inveniri veritas ab his qui neſciunt Traditionem*, lib.3.cap.2.pag.169.

(b) *Eam ſanctorum virorum ſemper celebravit eruditio* Aug. lib.1. *contra* Julianum & lib.2.de Bapt.c.3.

(c) *Sententiam noſtram non novam promimus, ſed jampridem ab anteceſſoribus noſtris ſtatutam.* Epiſt.70.

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Age (and conſequently not this) could either be ignorant of, or knowingly recede from the Doctrine of their Fathers, nor they from their Fathers, and ſo upward to the Apoſtles: And indeed *Cyprian* carries it higher, even to the Apoſtles whiles he calls it *The Faith of the Catholick Church*, and reckons it amongſt the *Apoſtolicall and Evangelicall precepts*(a). And *Firmilian* expreſſely affirmes it was delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles (b). And will theſe mens confidence yet ſerve them to aſſert that no error could come into the Church by Tradition?

If all thoſe Eminent *African* Biſhops and Churches might either miſunderſtand their Anceſtors or deceive their poſterity (as Mr *White* cannot deny they did either the one or other) why might not the *Spaniſh*, or *French*, or *Romiſh* do it. If it be ſaid, there was a promiſe to the contrary at leaſt for the Church of Rome. To ſay nothing of the manifeſt weakneſſe of that pretence I anſwer two things: 1. That Mr *White* expreſſely rejects this Infallibility by promiſe. 2. However this Argument being of another nature and depending not upon the promiſe of God, but the nature and evidence of the thing is by this inſtance irrefragably overthrown.

Anſw. 4. That way of proving which was rejected by the Prophets and godly Jewes, by Chriſt and by the Apoſtles is not to be approved, much leſſe preferred before that way which they approved and uſed; but this way of proving the truth of a Doctrine by Tradition from their next Anceſtours and the Teſtimony of the preſent Church was rejected by the Prophets *&c.* and by Chriſt

(a) *Quare Eccleſiæ Catholicæ fidem ac veritatem et tenere debemus firmiter et docere, et per omnia Evangelica et Apoſtolica præcepta rationem divinæ diſpenſationis atque unitatis oſtendere. Epiſ.* 73. *ad Julaianum. Nos veritati conſuetudinem junximus ab initio hoc tenentes quod à Chriſto & ab Apoſtolo traditum eſt Epiſt.* 75. *Cypr.* p. 164. *ſedit. il. Rigalt.*

and the Apoſtles: *Ergo*, It is not now to be approved. For the Minor (in which all the doubt lies) it conſiſts of two Branches: The firſt relating to the old Teſtament; The ſecond to the New:

The firſt is: That this way was diſowned by the Prophets and godly Jewes under the old Teſtament: It is true ſome of the Jewes did owne this Popiſh opinion as you may read *Jer.*44.17. But the Prophets were of another perſwaſion. *Ezek.*20.18. *Walke not in the Statutes of your Fathers.* And from Tradition they uſed to ſend their people *to the Law and Teſtimony* Iſa. 8. 20. And the godly Kings of *Judah* did not make Tradition (as the Papiſts do) but the written Law (as the Proteſtants do) the rule of their reformation: Thus *David* 1*Chron.*16. 40.—to do according to all that is Written in the Law: Thus *Hezekiah* 2 *Chron.*31. he did all, as it is Written in the Law of the Lord: So *Joſiah* 2 *Chron.*34.30,31. and 35. 12. The like did *Ezra* long after *Ezra* 6. 18. and *Nehemiah* chap. 8. *They dwelt in Booths, as it is Written.* Here Scripture recovers what Tradition had loſt, for though God had commanded this, yet *ſince the daies of* Joſhua *they had not done ſo* verſ. 17. By all which we evidently diſcerne how different their opinion was from this of the Papiſts, and how little confidence they put in Tradition, *Joſiah* would not ſo much as make *Hezekiahs* reformation his rule nor *Hezekiah* take his patterne from *Jehoſhaphats* reformation, but ſtill every one had immediate recourſe to the written Word; For it ſeems it was a Language that theſe Holy men underſtood not, That Scripture was *a corrupt writing, a leaden rule, a dumb maſter.*

§. 7. There is indeed one Objection againſt the conſequence from the Jewes to the Chriſtians and from the Old Teſtament to the New: I ſhall give it you in the words of one of the acuteſt of our Adverſaries, *i. e.* Mr *White*,

Mr *White*, *The Law of the Jewes was delivered in Tables of Stone and the volume of the Law, to which it is expreſſely oppoſed that God will write the Law of Chriſtians in their hearts.* (a)

I Anſwer, 1. The words are not to be underſtood abſolutely (as they ſound) but comparatively, not as if they did wholly deny that the Moſaicall Law was written in the Heart (for that is affirmed in other places as *Deut.* 30. 6. *The Lord thy God will circumciſe thy heart and the heart of thy ſeed*) or as if they did affirme that the Chriſtian Law was written only in mens hearts and not in Paper (which the Papiſts themſelves dare not aſſert) but onely it is a comparative expreſſion like that, *I will have mercy and not ſacrifice*, *Chriſt ſent me not to baptiſe but to preach*, i. e. principally and primarily, for elſe the one as well as the other was enjoyned by God: And ſo it is here implied that the Chriſtian Law ſhould be written more eminently, upon the hearts of Chriſtians, then it ordinarily was upon the hearts of the Jewes, and that it ſhould be writ in a more legible Character.

Anſw. 2. If we examine in whoſe hearts this Chriſtian Law is written, we ſhall find it concernes not the Tradition, of the Church by which all things are to be regulated: For I demand of them was this promiſe made and performed to all that are called Chriſtians, or onely to the elect and ſincere Chriſtians, or onely to the Pope and Biſhops? If they ſay the firſt then one Chriſtian as well as another is furniſhed with this rule of all Controverſies, and conſequently as able to judge of Con-

(a) *Certiſſimum eſt legem Judæorum Tabulis lapideis et Deuteronomii volumine traditam eſſe, cui opponitur expreſſe in Prophetis Deum legem Chriſtianorum in cordibus fidelium Scripturum. De fide Tract.* 1: §. 6.

troverſies, then lay-men and Miniſters have this Law equally written in their hearts; if they ſay the ſecond, That it is onely the elect and ſincere Chriſtians (as indeed it is), then it muſt be ſomething elſe beſide Tradition which is no leſſe known to the hypocriticall pretender then to the ſincere profeſſor of Chriſtianity; If they ſay the third, That this Law was written onely in the hearts of the Pope and Biſhops met in Councell (As what is there ſo ridiculous which ſome of our Adverſaries will not ſay rather then confeſſe their errours and give glory to God?) They are evidently confuted by the words of the place, Jer. 31. 34. *They ſhall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every one his brother, ſaying, know the Lord for they ſhall all know me from the leaſt of them unto the greateſt--for I will forgive their iniquity.* And beſides Mr *White* himſelfe ſaith, This Law is written onely in cordibus *fidelium* in the hearts of the *faithfull:* Now in what Dictionary we ſhall find *fidelis* to be tranſlated Atheiſt, Sodomite, Magitian, *&c.* (*Epithetes* not without cauſe given to Popes and Popiſh Biſhops by their own Authors) I would gladly be informed.

Anſw. 3. If we enquire what this is, which is here ſaid to be written in their hearts, we ſhall ſee Mr *White's* invention was better then his judgment or his conſcience: with what Spectales do theſe men read this Writing in the heart, that tell us this was the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, Indulgences, Invocation of Saints, Popes Supremacy, the Churches Infallibility? But you muſt know though this Writing was from God, yet the interpretation belongs to the Pope, whoſe will ſtands for his reaſon, and his word for a Law: But if we conſult the Prophet: If with the Popes good leave God may be his own Interpreter: He tels you this was the Inſcription γνῶθι κύριον Know the Lord. The knowledge of God *Jer.* 31. 33. and the fear of God *Jer.* 32. 39, 40.

And

And this Law written in the heart was ſo far from being appointed by God for a rule to walke by (much leſs was it to juſtle out the word, as the Papiſts now abuſe it) that the uſe of this was only to help them to make the word their rule *Ezek.* 26. 27. *I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes* Hence that in *Iſ.* 59. 21. *My Spirit that is in thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth ſhall not depart out of thy mouth*: So this objection being diſcharged, the conſequence remaines in full force, and Traditions being diſapproved under the old Teſtament cannot be approved under the new: But I ſhall more fully prove that in the next branch, which is this.

§. 8. 2. This way of proving the truth of Doctrines by verbal tradition is diſallowed by Chriſt and the Apoſtles: He knowes nothing of the Phariſees, and indeed but little of the New Teſtament, that knowes not that this was the great Doctrine of the Phariſees: And from their ſchool the Papiſts had this Doctrine of the certainty of Tradition: So little reaſon had *Du. Moulin* to write a book about the novelty of Popery when diverſe of their Doctrines have ſuch a venerable Antiquity that they are as old as the Phariſees. No wonder the Church of *Rome* hath diverſe Doctrines that Chriſt never delivered to them, for they had a great part of the leaven of the Phariſees left them for a legacy. And from them they had their bold expreſſions by which they advance Tradition above the Scripture: The Author of the book called עמודי גולה hath this ſaying, *think not that the written law is the Foundation of our Faith, but the law of orall Tradition*, And again in the book *Juchaſ. p.* 158. *Without this orall law* (of Tradition) *the whole law would be in darkneſſe*; and again, *all thoſe things which our Rabbins taught us we are equally to believe as the Law of Moſes.* But this is ſo known, that it is frivolous to multiply

teſtimonies of this kind: The footſteps of this principle you may diſcern in diverſe places of the New Teſtament; They made the Tradition of the fathers, the rule of their Faith *Mat.* 15. 2. *VVhy do thy Diſciples tranſgreſſe the Tradition of the Elders.* St *Paul* mentions it as one of his Phariſaicall errours, *that he was exceedingly zealous of the Traditions of his Fathers Gal.* 1. 14. And St *Peter* ſpeaks of it as a part or effect of their redemption by Chriſt that they were *delivered from a vain converſation received by Tradition from their Fathers.* 1. *Peter.* 1. this ſufficiently ſhews what their opinion was. Now let us hear what reflection Chriſt and the Apoſtles made upon it: And there you ſhall find that which would end the controverſy with ingenious adverſaries *viz.* That whereas the Romaniſts tell us that the deſerting of Tradition is the true cauſe and ſpring of all errours, on the contrary, our Saviour makes this the Fountain of their errours, their forſaking the Scripture, not their receding from the Tradition of their Anceſtors, *Mat.*22. 29. *Ye do erre not knowing the Scriptures*, we are beholden to the Papiſts that they do not ſay, there is a corruption in the Text, and Scripture is put in for Tradition: For ſurely if Chriſt had been of the mind of thoſe Gentlemen, he never had a fitter opportunity to utter it, then now, for the Sadduces were noted as enimies to Traditions. And the Doctrine of the reſurrection, was but darkely delivered in Scripture at leſt in the Pentatuch, and more plainly by Tradition: So now or never was the time for Chriſt to ſay to the Sadduces (as doubtleſſe Mr *White* would, if he had been preſent, and Chriſt ſhould, if Mr *Whites* Argument be good) *you erre, becauſe you take no heed to the Traditions of your Anceſtors.* But here is not a ſyllable about that, but all is caſt upon their not knowing the Scriptures: Thus in the reſolution of that great controverſy concerning the *Meſſias*, Chriſt doth

not

not confute the Jewes, nor ſtabliſh the Truth from Tradition (though there was eminent occaſion for it at that time, there being ſuch a Tradition then rife amongſt them, that the time of the coming of the *Meſſias* was at hand, *Daniels* week being nigh exſpired, and with it a general expectation of him) but from Scripture: Chriſt proves himſelf to be the true *Meſſias* by ſeveral Arguments, by the Teſtimony of *John* (who was a Prophet, yea, and more then a Prophet) by his Fathers voice from heaven by his miracles, and above all by the Scripture, how came Chriſt to omit that which (if thoſe men do not deceive us) was more conſiderable then all the reſt *viz.* Tradition and the Teſtimony of the preſent Church. A ſtrange overſight, you will ſay, but it ſeemes it was a diſcovery denied to Chriſt, and all the Apoſtles, and reſerved to theſe laſt times. Anſwerable to this was the practiſe of the godly *Bereans* who did examine St *Pauls* Doctrine not by Tradition (as the Papiſts do) but by the Scripture *Acts* 17.11. And St *Paul* himſelf evidenceth the ſoundneſſe of his Doctrine not by its conformity with Tradition (which our Adverſaries lay ſuch ſtreſſe upon that *S. Clara* with ſeverall others affirme that *they receive the Scripture onely ſo farre as they agree with Tradition* (a) but by its conſonancy to the Scriptures, ſaying, *That he witneſſed none other thing then what was in* Moſes *and the Prophets*, Act.26.22. and Act. 24.14,15. So then, the queſtion now is, which is the more rationall way to reſolve a Chriſtians doubts and

(a) *Prodiit quidam Dialogus à Docto Amico meo compoſitus—— ſolenniter Pariſiis approbatus à Doctoribus deputatis Sorbonæ—— qui expreſſe aſſevit Eccleſiam ideo recipere Scripturas quia & in quantum ſunt conformes fidei quam ab Apoſtolis per Traditiones accepit, non è converſo. Et hactenus ſine dubio rectiſſimè. Syſtem. cap. 11. in initio.*

ground

ground his Faith, whether that which hath had the approbation of all the Holy-men of God in both Teſtaments, or the ingenious deviſe of theſe witty Doctors that come with their *quintum Evangelium* into the World, that is, whether Scripture or Tradition. I know one thing will be ſaid, That the Apoſtles did urge Traditions as well as Scriptures, to this purpoſe we oft heare of that, 2 Theſ. 2.15. *Hold the Tradition which ye have been taught whether by word or our Epiſtle*; To which I Anſwer briefly:

1. That if the Papiſts can demonſtrate any of their Traditions to be indeed Apoſtolicall (as theſe were) we ſhall receive them, if conformable to Scripture; but if they be diſſonant from Scripture, we have commiſſion from St *Paul* to renounce them though they be either of Apoſtolicall or Angelicall originall. *Gal.* 1.18.9.

2. The Argument I confeſſe is right of the Romiſh ſtamp *viz.* The *Theſſalonians* were bound to receive what they heard immediately from St *Pauls* mouth in ſuch things as for the ſubſtance of them were contained in the Scripture: Therefore we are now bound to receive all thoſe Traditions which the Church of Rome tell us they had from thoſe, that had them from thoſe, that had them from thoſe, that told them their Anceſtors, were told by their Anceſtors that ſome of their Anceſtors had it from *Paul* 1600 years agoe---*riſum teneatis amici?* This may ſerve for the fourth Anſwer.

§ 9. *Anſ.* 5. If this Doctrine be true, Scripture proof is not neceſſary for any point in Religion (for it aſſerts the ſufficiency of Tradition in it ſelf and without the Scripture:) But Scripture proof is neceſſary for confirmation of points in Religion: This I might prove from Scripture, but that hath been done allready in the former Anſwer, therefore I ſhall here confute this Argument of Tradition by Tradition and the teſtimony of the Fathers:

thers: To pick up all they have to this purpoſe would fill Volumes; I ſhall therefore ſingle out ſome few Illuſtrious Teſtimonies: Nothing can more evidently overthrow this goodly ſtructure then thoſe forementioned words of Cyprian, *We ought not to regard what others have done before us, but what Chriſt who was before all thought fit to be done: For we muſt follow Gods Truth, not mens cuſtome*(a). What Proteſtant can ſay more in few words then *Clemens Alexandrinus* in few words: *We aſſert nothing without Scripture* (b): Therefore he thought not Tradition a ſure evidence, though ſo near the Fountaine, much leſſe can it now give us any certainty having conflicted with hazards and been expoſed to the infection of 1300 years. St *Baſil* is expreſſe: *It is neceſſary that every word or thing be confirmed by the Holy Scriptures* (c). And elſe where he tells you, *It is a manifeſt defection from the Faith and token of Pride, either to reject any thing that is written, or to introduce any thing that is not written* (d). And *Conſtantine* ſpeaking of the rule by which all things were to be examined and judged, confines it to the Scripture. *The Books of the Prophets, and Apoſtles* (ſaith he) *do plainly inſtruct us what to think of Divine things: therefore laying aſide hoſtile diſcord, from the words which were divinely inſpired, let us take our expoſitions of quæſtions.* (e) It is a pitiful ſhift of *Bellarmines* to ſay

(a) Ex 63. ἐδὲν ἄλλες γεαφῆς λέγομεν. *Strom. lib. 6.*

(b) Δεῖ πᾶν ῥῆμα ἢ πρᾶγμα πιςεῦσαι τῇ μαρτυρίᾳ τῆς θεοπνεύςε γραφῆς *In moralium ſumma definit. 26. cap. 1.* (c) Φανερὰ ἔκπλωσις τῆς πίςεως καὶ ὑποταγῆς καταγρεία ἢ ἀθετεῖν τι τῶν γεγραμμένων ἢ ἐπεισάγειν τῶν μὴ γεγραμμένων. *homil. de fide* (d) *Evangelici libri ſunt & Apoſtolici antiquorumque Prophetarum ſanctiones, quæ nos erudiunt quid de ſacra lege ſapiamus. Proinde hoſtili poſita diſcordia ex verbis divinitus inſpiratis ſumamus quæſtionum explicationes. Hiſtor tripart. lib. 2. c. 6.*

that Conſtantine *was a better Emperor then Doctor*; whereas in this particular *Theodoret* aſſures us that the whole Synod did highly approve of this ſaying, nor did any of the Antients ever condemne him for it: And indeed the practiſe of the Synod ſhewes their approbation of the Speech and conſequently gives us another Argument for *they determined the controverſy according to the Scriptures* ſaith *Ambroſe* (a), and *Athanaſius* too whoſe words are theſe, *The Biſhops congregated at Nice, collecting together all things they could out of Scripture to defend their opinion, they affirmed that the Son was conſubſtantiall to the Father* (b). And *Bellarmine* himſelf confeſſeth it: *The Councell of Nice, when they defined the Son to be conſubſtantiall to the Father, they drew their Concluſion out of the Scriptures* (c). Notable is that place of *Chryſoſtomes* becauſe it acquaints us with his own judgment and the judgment of the Chriſtians of that age, *If any thing be aſſerted* (ſaith he) *without Scripture the minde of the hearer wavers* —— *But when Scripture comes, that confirmes the ſpeakers words and ſettles the hearers minde* (d). *Tertullian* thus confutes the opinion of *Hermogenes*, that things were made of præexiſtent matter with, *I never read it, let* Hermogenes *ſhew where it is written, or elſe let him fear the woe denounced againſt thoſe thoſe that adde to the Scripture* (e). And againe, *I do*

(a) *De fide ad Gratianum* lib. 1. cap. 8. (b) *Niceæ congregati Epiſcopi collectis in unum quæ ex ſacris literis ad ſententiam ſuam tuendam facerent —— filium conſubſtantialem eſſe aſſeverant In Epiſtolâ ad Epictetum.*

(c) *Concilium Nicenum cum definivit filium Patri eſſe ὁμοούσιον concluſionem deduxit ex Scripturis. De Conciliis lib. 2. cap. 12.*

(d) Ἐαν τι δὲ ἄγραφον λέγηται ἡ διάνοια τῶν ἀκροατῶν σκάζει —*in Pſal. 95.* —*nuſquam adhuc legi. Scriptum eſſe doceat Hermogenis officina. Si non eſt ſcriptum, timeat væ illud adjicientibus aut detrahentibus deſtinatum. con. Hermogenem cap. 22.*

not receive what thou bringeſt of thy own without the Scripture(a). And againe, *Take away from Hereticks the things they have in common with Heathens, that they may referre their queſtions to Scripture alone and they can never ſtand* (b). But the Papiſts are of another mind, for if you will believe them, if Scripture alone muſt judge Controverſies, Hereſies will never fall. *Theodoret* profeſſeth *he was not ſo bold as to aſſert any thing wherein the Scripture was ſilent* (c). Thus *Origen: It is neceſſary that we call in the Teſtimony of Scripture, for without this our expoſitions have no credit* (d). *Auſtin* is moſt full and plaine, I will mention but one place, *Whether they have the Church they cannot ſhew but from the Canonicall Books of Scripture*: And yet there is no queſtion wherein Tradition ſeems more pertinent, and where the Papiſts urge it with more vehemency. I might adde a thouſand pregnant places more, but either theſe or none will ſuffice to prove that the Antients did judge Scripture proofe neceſſary for the confirmation of any Doctrine in Religion, which the Romaniſts now judge not neceſſary. The Fathers pretended Tradition for their opinion, and the Papiſts pretend it now: Either Tradition deceived the Fathers then, or it deceives the Papiſts now: Either will ſerve our turne to ſhew the Fallibility of Tradition. If it be ſaid there are no leſſe expreſſe Teſtimonies alledged by the Papiſts on the behalfe of Tradition, and why ſhould not they be received as well as thoſe on the behalfe of the Scripture.

(a) *Non recipio quod extra Scripturam de tuo infers. de carne Chriſti ca.7.* (b) *Aufer Hereticis, quæ cum Ethnicis ſapiunt, ut de ſolis Scripturis quæſtiones ſuas ſiſtant, & ſtare non poſſunt. De reſurrectione carnis cap.3.* (c) ἐγὼ δὲ οὕτως εἰμὶ θεραπευτὴς ὥστε φάναι τι σεσιγημένον παρὰ τῇ θείᾳ γραφῇ Dialog.2. (d) *Utrum ipſi Eccleſiam teneant non niſi Divinarum ſcripturarum Canonicis libris oſtendant. De unitate eccleſiæ cap. 16.*

I Anſwer, 1. If the Fathers do in ſome places aſſert the ſufficiency of proof from Tradition, and in other places the neceſſity of Scripture proofe, theſe aſſertions being directly contrary one to another it invalidates their Authority in matters of Religion: For ſo ſay the Lawyers moſt juſtly and truly, *Teſtis pugnantia dicens fidem non facit.*

2. But upon enquiry it will be found in the places cited for Tradition (eſpecially if you compare them with thoſe alledged for Scripture) that they do plead Tradition onely as a ſecondary Argument to confirme that Faith which is grounded upon Scripture, but it is as clear as the Sunne that they ever made Tradition ſtrike ſaile to the Scripture, and made no ſcruple of deſerting Tradition when the evidence of Scripture Arguments ſtood on the other ſide.

Anſw. 6. The Romaniſts themſelves are undeniable inſtances of the vanity of their own Argument: They tell us Tradition cannot deceive us: Why Tradition hath deceived them: There are diverſe contradictory opinions maintained in the Church of Rome, about 300 are reckoned out of *Bellarmine:* The diſſenters, though never ſo implacably divided amongſt themſelves, do agree in this, That they believe nothing but what hath come to them by Tradition from their Fathers, and ſo from the Apoſtles; Then certainly either Tradition hath deceived ſome of them, or both the parts of a contradiction may be true: I ſhall not launch forth into the Sea of Romiſh contradictions, nor take notice of pettie differences amongſt obſcure Authors, but ſhall inſtance in two materiall points, *viz.* The Doctrine of Gods grace, and mans will, and the appurtenances as they are controverted between the *French* and *Italian* Papiſts: In both of them, it is as clear as the Sun that both parties pretend Tradition: Now the Trumpet of Tradition gives an uncertaine

taine ſound, for Tradition tels the Jeſuites this is truth, That the will is determined to good actions, not by Gods grace, but by its own inclination and agency: Tradition tels the Dominicans and Janſeniſts that this is a groſſe falſity: So for the Church if you enquire in whom Supreme Authority and Infallibility reſides (for that is the great queſtion.) Tradition tels the Jeſuites, it is in the Pope; Tradition not long ſince told the Councels of *Baſil* and *Conſtance* that it was in a Councell, not in the Pope, and ſo it tells many of the French Doctors at this day; And (I will tell you a thing in your eare) both theſe are Apoſtolicall Traditions though you and I think they are directly contrary: It is true that St *James* ſaith, *No Fountaine can yield both Salt-water and Freſh*, Chap. 3. 8. 12. But that is to be underſtood onely of the Fountaine of the Scripture, but the Fountain of Tradition can yield both Salt and Freſh, both bitter and ſweet. You may well allow Tradition to be Infallible, for you ſee it can work wonders, and reconcile contradictions: If this ſeem ſtrange to you, you may expect the proof of it in an Appendix to the next Edition of M^r *VVhites* Apology for Tradition demonſtrating that *Contradictoria poſſunt eſſe ſimul vera*, to be dedicated to the Defenders of Tranſubſtantiation; but to returne: What ſay our maſters to this difficulty; why, I will faithfully acquaint you where their ſtrength lies, and what their pretences are: I find three things which are or may with ſome colour be ſaid for them to ſafeguard the Infallibility of Tradition againſt this dreadfull ſhock.

1. They ſay theſe are onely Doctrines ventilated in Schooles, not of any great conſequence to Chriſtians: Thus the controverſies between the Jeſuites and Dominicans about Gods free grace and mans free-will (they ſay) are but Scholaſticall niceties, wherein the ſubſtance of Religion is not at all concerned: So for that point of Supremacy

Supremacy and Infallibility it is no great matter, *The diſſenters onely ſeek out the decider of Points of Doctrine that is, by whoſe mouth we are to know, which be our Articles of Faith, whether by the Popes or Councels or both, which is not much materiall* (ſaith *Ruſhworth's* ſecond Edition *Dial.* 3. §. 9.) *to our purpoſe whatever the truth be, ſuppoſing we acknowledge no Articles of Faith but ſuch as have deſcended to us from Chriſt and his Apoſtles;*

For Anſwer, I would know whether a private Chriſtian can Infallibly know what are thoſe Articles of Faith which came from Chriſt and his Apoſtles without the deciſion of Pope or Councell, or not: If they ſay he can know it, then it followes that private Chriſtians may be Infallible of themſelves, and conſequently there is no neceſſity of Pope or Councels, for what need any more then Infallibility? If they ſay he cannot, then an Infallible guide, judge, and interpreter is neceſſary to Tradition as well as to Scripture, and without this Tradition cannot make us Infallible, and conſequently, if it be doubtfull and diſputable who this Judge is, it muſt be alſo doubtfull whether the Tradition be right; and therefore Tradition cannot make me Infallible: It is an audacity beyond parallel that they who make it ſo materiall as that they aſſert we have no certainty in our Faith for want of a decider of points of Doctrine, and make no ſcruple of ſending us to Hell for want of ſuch a Decider, ſhould ſay this amongſt themſelves is not materiall, for (as to uſe and benefit) it is all one to have no decider of controverſies, and not to be agreed who it is, according to that known maxime of the Lawyers, *Idem eſt non apparere & non eſſe:* As for the other points between the Jeſuites and Dominicans, how materiall they are we will take their own judgments: If we may believe either one or other of them, the points are of great moment: If you aske the Janſeniſts or Dominicans their opinion of the Jeſuiticall Doctrine,

Doctrine, they tell you *that it is the very poiſon of the* Pelagian *Hereſy, yea, it is worſe then Pelagianiſme, that they are contemners of Grace, ſuch as rob God of his honour, taking halfe of it to themſelves, that it is here diſputed, Whether God alone be God, or whether the will of man be a kind of inferiour, yet (in part) an Independent Deity.* Theſe are Mr *Whites* words in his *Sonus Buccinæ. queſt. Theolog. in Epiſ. & in parag.* 7.

And for the Jeſuites, they are not one jot behind hand with them in their cenſure of the Dominican Doctrine; which (ſay the Jeſuites) brings back the ſtoicall paradox, robs God of the Glory of his goodneſſe, makes God a lyer and the Author of ſinne; and yet when we tell them of theſe diviſions, the breach is preſently healed, theſe ſavages are grown tame, their differences triviall, and onely ſome School niceties, wherein Faith is not concerned: And now both Stoicks and Pelagians are grown Orthodox, and the grace, glory, ſoveraignty and holineſſe of God, are matters but of ſmall concernment: and ſo it ſeems they are to them, elſe they durſt not ſo ſhamelefly dally with them: But it is uſuall with them to make the greateſt points of Faith like Counters, which in computation ſometimes ſtand for pounds, ſometimes for pence, as intereſt and occaſion require: And it is worth Obſervation, Theſe very points of difference when they fall out among Proteſtants, between *Calvin* and *Arminius*, they are repreſented by our Adverſaries as very materiall and weighty differences, but when they come to their ſhare they are of no moment.

2. It may be ſaid, Tradition may deceive ſome of the Romaniſts but not all: Now it is the Church which is ſaid to be Infallible, not particular Doctors: For Anſwer, let it be remembred that I am not now ſpeaking of the deception of ſome few private Doctors, but the points alledged are controverted amongſt as learned and

devout men (as they call Devotion) as ever the Church of Rome had; here is Order againſt Order, Univerſity againſt Univerſity, Nation againſt Nation, all of them pretending Tradition for their contrary opinions with greateſt confidence and eagerneſſe. Premiſing this, I Anſwer, That Tradition which hath deceived thouſands of the beſt and Learnedſt Romaniſts may deceive ten thouſand, That which deceives the Jeſuites in ſome points may deceive the Dominicans in others, the Franciſcans in others: If it deceive the French Papiſts in ſome points, it may deceive the Italians in others, and ſo is not Infallible in any: Or, elſe, what bounds will theſe men ſet to the Infallibility of Tradition? Will they ſay Tradition is only Infallible in *France*, and thoſe of the ſame perſwaſion, who plead Tradition for the Supremacy of the Councell above the Pope? Or will they ſay the Infallibility of Tradition is kept beyond the Alpes among the Italian Doctors, who urge Tradition for the Popes Supremacy above Counccels? But what ſecurity will they give us, That the Fallibility of Tradition cannot paſſe over the Alpes and get from one ſide to the other? Indeed Infallibility may happily be a tender piece not able to get over thoſe ſnowy Mountains: But Fallibility can travell to all parts and at all times: In ſhort, it being certaine that Tradition doth deceive thouſands of them it may deceive the the reſt: Nor can this be any way prevented, but by pretending the promiſe of Infallibility; but this is Heterogeneous to the preſent enquiry, and they are now pleading for another Infallibility from the nature of Tradition, and that is hereby diſproved; and, for the fiction of a promiſe, I have diſcovered that before.

But the third and laſt pretence is moſt frequent; That however in leſſer points they may be miſtaken and divided, yet they are agreed in all that is *de fide*, in all points of

of Faith, that is, in such things as have been decided by Pope or Councell: I answer in few words, and thus I reinforce my Discourse. If Tradition might deceive them before such a Decision, it might deceive them afterwards; because the Decision of a Councell doth not alter the nature and property of Tradition: It is true (according to the opinion of some Papists) such a decision of a point may cause him to believe a Doctrine which before he doubted of or denied, because he may judge the Churches Authority so infallible and obliging to him, that Tradition with Scripture and all other things must strike saile to it: But the decision of a Councell cannot make that a Tradition, which was no Tradition, nor can it hinder, but that Tradition did deceive me before, and consequently might deceive me afterwards. For instance: If the Pope determine the controversie between the Jansenists and Jesuites about Predestination, Grace, Freewill, *&c.* his determination in favour of the Jesuits possibly may change some of the Jansenists judgments, because peradventure it is their principle that the Pope is the Infallible Judge of Controversies, to whom they must all submit: But (supposing that the Popes decides according to the verity of Tradition, and that must alwaies be supposed) a thousand of his decisions cannot hinder, but that all the Jansenists and Dominicans had untill that time been deceived by Tradition: So it seemes Tradition in that point was Fallible for above 1600 years together after Christ, and now upon the Popes determination *An.* 1653. it is *momento turbinis* grown Infallible; but neither will this do their work, for the nature of Tradition being the same, either it must be infallible in the foregoing ages, or else it must now be acknowledged. Fallible.

§. 11. *Answ.* 7. Although this one Answer might suffice to all their perplexing Arguments tending to shew the im-

poſſibility of any mutation or corruption where Tradition is pretended, *viz.* that it is apparent, there have been ſeverall mutations and corruptions where Tradition is owned: As it was a ſufficient confutation of that Philoſophers knotty Arguments alledged to prove that there was no motion, when his Adverſary walked before him; though happily the other brought ſome Arguments, that might puzzle an able diſputant to Anſwer. (which in that point is not hard to doe:) Or if any man ſhould urge a ſubtile Argument to prove the impoſſibility of Sins comming into the World, becauſe neither could the underſtanding be firſt deceived, nor the will corrupted without the deception of the underſtanding, it were ſufficient to alledge the univerſall experience of mankind to the contrary: So the undoubted experience of manifeſt corruptions in the Church ſo called, which no man that hath the uſe of his Eyes, and exerciſe of his reaſon or conſcience can be ignorant of, might juſtly ſilence all the cavils of wanton wits pretending to prove the impoſſibility of it: yet becauſe I will uſe all poſſible means to convince them, if God peradventure may give ſome of them repentance that they may recover themſelves from the ſnare of the Divell, I ſhall proceed farther and eaſily evince the poſſibility of corruption in that caſe, and point at ſome of thoſe many fountaines of corruption, from whence the ſtreames of errour might flow into the Church, notwithſtanding the pretence of, and adherence to the Doctrine of Tradition. And becauſe the anſwer of the Lord Falkland reduceth all to two branches: *If (ſaith he) a company of Chriſtians pretending Tradition for all they teach, could teach falſhoods, then ſome age muſt either have erred in underſtanding their Anceſtors, or have joyned to deceive their poſterity; but neither of theſe are credible.* I ſhall apply my Anſwer to him, firſt in generall, and then to the ſeverall branches of his Argument.

§. 12.

§. 12. In generall, the whole Argument is built upon a falſe ſuppoſition, as if the miſunderſtanding or deceit muſt needs come in as it were in one ſpring tide, as if it were impoſſible that the Tares of Errour ſhould be ſowne in the Church while men ſlept and never dreamed of it: The baſis of this Argument lies in an aſſertion of the impoſſibility of that, which the nature of it ſhewes to be moſt rationall and probable, and the experience of all ages ſhewes to be moſt uſuall, *i. e.* that corruption of Doctrines and manners (for in this both are alike) ſhould creep in by degrees: As *Jaſons* ſhip was waſted (ſo Truth was loſt) one piece after another: *Nemo repente fit turpiſſimus:* Who knowes not that errours crept into the Jewiſh Church gradually, and why might it not be ſo in the Chriſtian Church? We know very well, *Poſito uno abſurdo ſequuntur multa:* One error will breed an hundred, yet all its Children are not borne in one day. St *Paul* tels us *the myſtery of iniquity began to worke in his daies*, but was not brought to perfection till many ages after. The Apoſtle hath ſufficiently confuted this ſenceleſſe fancy, whileſt he tels us that Hereſy *eats like a canker or a gangreen, i. e.* by degrees, and is not worſt at firſt, but *encreaſeth to more ungodlineſſe,* 2 Tim. 2. 16, 17. As that cloud, which at firſt appearance was no bigger then a mans hand, did gradually overſpread the whole face of the Heavens; ſo thoſe opinions which at firſt were onely the ſentiments of the leſſer part, might by degrees improve and become the greater, or at leaſt by the favour of Princes, or power & learning of their advocates, become the ſtronger, untill at laſt, like *Moſes's* Rod they devoured the other Rods, & monopolizing to themſelves the liberty of writing & profeſſing their Doctrines, and ſuppreſſing all contrary Diſcourſes & Treatiſes, their Doctrine being propoſed by them as Catholick Doctrines and the Doctrines of their own and former ages (which

was

was frequently pretended by ſeverall Hereticks) and this propoſition not contradicted by conſiderable perſons, (which in ſome Ages were few and thoſe eaſily byaſſed) or the contradiction being ſpeedily ſuppreſſed, (which is very poſſible and hath been uſuall) it could not probably fall out otherwiſe, but that their opinion ſhould be tranſmitted to their Succeſſors for the Faith of their Age. Rome was not built in a day, neither in a civil, nor in a Spirituall notion. And *de facto*, that corruptions did creep into the Church of Rome by degrees, hath been ſo fully demonſtrated, that I need onely point the Reader to thoſe Authors who have done this worke, eſpecially to Momeys myſtery of Iniquity, and the excellent defence of it in French by *Rivet* againſt the cavils of *Coffeteau*.

2. I anſwer particularly, and in oppoſition to the firſt branch, I lay down this poſition: That the following Age, or the Major part of thoſe called Chriſtians, might eaſily miſtake the minde of the foregoing Age, of which many rationall accounts may be given. 1. There was no certaine way, whereby (for example) the particular Chriſtians of the third Age, might Infallibly know the Doctrines which were delivered by the whole Church of the ſecond Age. Remember the queſtion is not how probably they might believe, but how infallibly they might know it, for nothing will ſerve the Romaniſts turne, ſhort of Infallibility: It is true, the Chriſtians of *Antioch* might know what their Fathers delivered to them there, and they of *Epheſus* what was there delivered, but no Chriſtian could without miracles infallibly know, what were the Doctrines delivered to the Chriſtians in thoſe innumerable places where the Goſpell had got footing. Hence then I offer this Argument: Either this is ſufficient for the Infallibility of Tradition, that the Chriſtians in ſeverall Cities and places did underſtand what their Anceſtours taught in ſuch places, and would not deceive

ceive their poſterity in it, or it is not ſufficient, but it is neceſſary that Traditions ſhould be compared, and the Truth diſcovered in a generall Councell: If they ſay the former, then they aſſert the Infallibility, not onely of the Church or Biſhop of Rome, or of a generall Councell, or of the Catholick Church, but of every particular City: And to ſay Truth, Either this plea of Tradition is fallacious and abſurd, or every particular Church is Infallible: For (to uſe their own words) if the Chriſtians (ſuppoſe of *Epheſus*) could be deceived, then either they did not underſtand the Doctrine of their Anceſtors there delivered, or they did willingly deceive their poſterity; but neither of theſe were poſſible: *Ergo*, The Church of *Epheſus* was Infallible: If they will eat their own words, (as they will do any thing ſooner then retract their errors and returne to the Truth) and ſay the Church of *Epheſus*, might miſunderſtand their Anceſtors or deceive their Poſterity, then ſo might the Church of *Antioch* and that of *Alexandria*, and ſo the reſt, and what then becomes of Infallibility? If they ſay the latter, *viz.* That there is a neceſſity of a generall Councell to compare Traditions and declare the Truth, then they are deſired to remember, that as yet there had been no generall Councell, and conſequently no Infallibility, and therefore in that Age there might be a miſunderſtanding, yea many miſtakes: What elſe will they ſay? Will they ſay that a Chriſtian might Infallibly know the Truth by travelling to all places and companies of Chriſtians, and hearing it from their own mouths? This, though it might give ſatisfaction to ſuch a Chriſtian, yet it could not ſatisfy others who had no ſuch evidence. Or will they ſay the Chriſtians knew it by Teſtimonies received from every Church and particular recitals of their Traditions? Why ſuch Teſtimonials are not ſo much as pretended to have been required, or given, and if they had been

given, yet that could ſatisfy none, but thoſe few eyewitneſſes of them. It remaines therefore that there was no way whereby the Chriſtians of the third Age might be aſſured of the genuine Traditions of the ſecond. (which was the thing to be proved) And the ſolidity and ſatisfactorineſſe of this one Anſwer, (if there were no more) appeares plainly from hence, that the great Architects of this deviſe make it eſſentiall to ſuch a Tradition that it come from all the Apoſtles, ſo Mr *White* informes us, ſince *all Catholicks when they ſpeak of Tradition deliberately & exactly, define it to be a Doctrine univerſally taught by the Apoſtles we may ſafely conclude, where two Apoſtles teach differently, neither is Tradition.* Apology for Tradition Encounter 6 & elſewhere his reply to our inſtance of the Tradition of communicating Infants is this, *That it was a Tradition begun by ſome Apoſtles, not all, in ſome countries not all. Encounter.* 2. Hence then I thus argue, The following Chriſtians could have no aſſurance what Doctrine was taught by all the Apoſtles without a generall Councell of all the Churches, ſeverally taught by the ſeverall Apoſtles; but ſuch generall Councell there was none in the third Age: Therefore the third Age could not Infallibly underſtand the Apoſtolicall Traditions delivered in the ſecond, which was the thing to be proved.

§. 14. 2. There are many inſtances which may be given of mens miſunderſtanding the Doctrines of the preceding age: We have one inſtance among our ſelves, concerning the judgment of the Church of *England* of the next preceding Age in the Quinquarticular points, The favourers of *Arminius* his Doctrines tell us, that ſhe maintained their Doctrines: Their Adverſaries tell us, ſhe held the contrary: and there are Books written, and Arguments urged on both ſides; he that doubts of this, let him look into Mr *Prin* on the one ſide, and Dr *Heylin* on the other: And why might it not be thus

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in former ages? And ſeeing there are great miſtakes daily committed, and freſh diſputes managed, about the opinions of thoſe Authors, who have left us their mind (as plainly as words can make it) in books, which are alwaies preſent to our peruſal; how can it be ſenſe for a man to ſay, that one may infallibly know their mind by a tranſient hearing of them? what tedious controverſies are there about the judgment of S. *Auguſtine*, and others of the Fathers, in ſundry points of great moment, wherein they have as fully explained themſelves as any Preacher can do, or uſeth to do? Suppoſe now the Fathers preach the ſame things and words which they have left us in writings, (as diverſe of their works were no other then their Sermons) can any man without nonſence ſay, that the diligent Reader may be miſtaken, and the attentive Hearer is infallible? We all know the five Propoſitions of *Janſenius* condemned lately at *Rome*. The Janſeniſts deny that to be the ſenſe of *Ianſenius* his words, which the Pope and the Jeſuits affix to them: both parties are agreed in his words, (which ſeldome happens in Orall Traditions, and conſequently makes the argument ſtronger) yet they differ in the ſenſe, which one ſide ſaith is Heretical, the other aver it is innocent. Why might not in like manner ſeveral parties, though it be ſuppoſed they perfectly remembred the words delivered by *Peter* in a Sermon 20 years before, (which I would not grant but that it is a work of charity to help the weak) what hinders but that they may underſtand them in contrary ſenſes, and ſo derive from them contrary concluſions, and yet both pretend to aſſert nothing but the doctrine delivered from S. *Peter*'s mouth? Are there not ſharp conteſts among Popiſh Authors about the opinion of the Councel of *Trent* in diverſe points, and that too among thoſe who were preſent upon the place, and heard their debates? And will theſe men ſtill undertake to prove that

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Snow is black, or (which is equivalent to it) that it was impoſſible to do that which is uſually done, viz. to miſtake the doctrines of the former age? Let us conſider one Scripture inſtance. S. *Paul* tels us, *a man is juſtified by faith without the works of the law*, and that *Abraham was thus juſtified:* the Papiſts remember the words, but miſtake the ſence. Now put caſe S. *Paul* had preached the ſame words (as he did unqueſtionably the ſame things) which he wrot, who can ſay (that hath any care what he ſaith) that they that miſtook the ſenſe of thoſe words when they read them in a Book, could not as eaſily have miſtaken them, when they heard them from his mouth? Eſpecially if it be conſidered, that St. *James* preached and wrot a Doctrine in words ſeemingly contrary to theſe. My Queſtion now is, what ſhould hinder, that the ſeveral hearers of thoſe Apoſtles, perfectly remembring their various expreſſions, might not derive contrary Traditions from them? why might not the one ſide have apprehended *Paul* as excluding all works in the Proteſtant ſenſe from Juſtification, and the others have underſtood *James* (as the Papiſts at this day do) as conjoying faith and works in juſtification? And if this cannot be denied, then it follows unavoidably, that errors may come into the Church under pretence of Tradition, which was the thing to be proved. Another inſtance we have in the Sadduces, whoſe error is reported to have come into the world under the colour of Tradition: for when *Antigonus Sochæus* a Maſter in Iſrael, was teaching, that if there was no future reward, no immortality of the Soul, no reſurrection of the body, yet we ought to ſerve God: his Scholar *Sadok* ſo miſ-underſtood him, that he broached a new doctrine, and turned his Hypothetical Propoſition into a Categorical, and aſſerted, that there was no reſurrection of the body, nor immortality of the ſoul, &c. And will theſe men pawn their ſouls on it, that it was impoſſible for the Apoſtles hea-

hearers to commit the ſame miſtakes in the doctrines they heard from their mouths? Hath not S. *John* given us an Inſtance of eaſineſs and earlineſſe of ſuch miſtakes in Joh. 21. where, upon that expreſſion of Chriſt's concerning *John*, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* the Evangeliſt obſerves, that a Tradition was delivered *among the bretbren, that that Diſciple ſhould not dye*, verſ. 22.23. In a word, if it be ſo familiar a thing (as daily experience ſhews) for common hearers to miſ-underſtand the words, and miſtake the ſenſe of a Preacher, when they are but newly come from him, and all things are freſh in their memory, what a deſperate aſſertion is this, that a man can certainly remember the words, and infallibly underſtand the ſenſe of thoſe Sermons he heard from his former Miniſters, it may be twenty years ago? And if it be granted (as it cannot be denied) that the hearers of the ſecond age might miſtake the doctrines delivered by the teachers of the foregoing age in ſome things; why might not the hearers of the third age miſtake their predeceſſors in other thinks, and ſo of the fourth, and further, untill at laſt the Syſteme of Divinity came to that ruthful habit in which it is delivered in the Church of *Rome?* To clear this further, conſider (what I have already intimated.)

§. 15. 3. The words of our predeceſſors may be remembred, and yet the ſenſe wonderfully perverted. Now as it is not words, but the ſenſe of them wherein the ſoul lyes, ſo all or moſt of the controverſies in the Church are about the ſenſe of words. And in this, Scripture and Tradition are equally lyable to the ſame fate; the words may be agreed, and the controverſy ariſe ſolely about the ſenſe of them. For example, the Tradition of the firſt age was this, That God alone was to be worſhipped, not men, not Angels, not Images: Nor is it poſſible that any man ſhould expreſſe his mind more plainly and poſitively then

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the Fathers unanimouſly did in this particular. Now comes the next age, and they receive indeed this Tradition, but then here ariſeth a queſtion, In what ſenſe they ſaid God alone was to be worſhipped? S. *Auſtin* takes it up, and ſaith, they meant that God alone was to be worſhipped with *Latria*, and the Saints with *Dulia*. And although it is evident enough, that by *Dulia* S. *Auſtin* meant nothing but a civil worſhip (becauſe he aſcribes it to the living as well as the dead, and when he takes *Dulia* for a religious worſhip, he appropriates it to God [a]), yet this unhappy diſtinction falling into the hands of his perverſe ſucceſſors, gave riſe to another controverſy, viz. In what ſenſe S. *Auſtin* aſcribes *Dulia* to the creature? And thus, as in the throwing of a ſtone upon the water, one circle begets another, ſo doth one controverſy ingender another, and every one of them is a convincing evidence of the fallibility of Tradition. Take one Inſtance more: S. *Gregory*, the great Pope, delivers this doctrine to poſterity, as his doctrine, and the doctrine of his Anceſtors, that *whoſoever cals himſelf Univerſal Biſhop, is proud, profane, abominable, wicked, blaſphemous, and the forerunner of Antichriſt.* This is confeſſed. Now *Gregory*'s ſucceſſors have an itch after the name and thing of Univerſal Biſhop: in order to this they ſtart a queſtion (where indeed there was none to men that had either ſcience or conſcience) viz. In what ſenſe *Gregory* condemned this title of Univerſal Biſhop? For this is a Maxime, let the Pope ſpeak what words he pleaſe, the ſenſe is alwaies orthodox: Oh, ſay theſe Sophi, *John of Conſtantinople called himſelf Univerſal Biſhop, as if he were the onely Biſhop, and all others but his Vicars. and that they muſt not ſo much as have the name of Biſhop*, a ſenſe that poor *John* never

[a] *Qu. 94. in Exodum.*

dreamed

dreamed of, nor any man of that age (for then ſurely *Anaſtaſius* the Patriarch of *Antioch*, and *Mauritius* the Emperour would never have written to *Gregory* (as they did) that it was but a frivolous thing that *John* deſired:) ſo now by this ingenuous device, here comes in a new, contrary, and that too (forſooth) a Catholick Tradition, viz. That the Pope is, and ever ought to be, and ever was Univerſal Biſhop. But whether the Popiſh gloſſe be ſound or rotten, it equally ſerves my purpoſe, which is to ſhew, how controverſies may ariſe about the ſenſe, and errors come in at that door, though Tradition hath made a true report of the words, (which it ſeldome doth.) I might multiply inſtances, but theſe will ſuffice for a candid Adverſary, and others nothing will ſuffice.

§ 16. 4. This will be made more probable, if you conſider the quality of ſome former ages, which might and did give great advantage to error to creep in under the mask of Tradition, and conſequently evinceth how eaſy it was for one age to miſtake the doctrines of the preceding age. To this end conſider with me the condition of the tenth age, of which I ſhall deſire you to judg according to the teſtimony of their own authors. The words of *Baronius* are theſe. *In the nine hundredth year of Chriſt, the third Indiction, a new age begins, which by reaſon of its aſperity and barrenneſſe of good is wont to be called the Iron age, from the deformity of abounding wickedneſſe, the Leaden; and from the ſcarcity of writers, the obſcure age* (a). And *Gentbrard*, though according to the manner of the Beaſt he chargeth it upon the Lutherans, that they only call it *ſæculum infelix*, an unhappy age, yet he

(a) *Anno Chriſti nongenteſimo, Indictione tertiâ, novum inchoatur ſeculum, quod ſui aſperitate ac boni ſterilitate Ferreum, maliq; exuad antis deformitate Plumbeum, atque inopiâ Scriptorum appellari conſuevit Obſcurum. ad An.* 900.

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elſewhere forgets himſelf (therein the more inexcuſable, becauſe he was one of them who ought to have good memories) and in his Chronology plainly tels us, *This is called the unhappy age, being barren of ingenuous and learned men* (a): and he tells you, that the Popes of that age (the principal conſervators of Tradition, and the ſubjects of Infallibility) *had altogether fallen from the vertue of their Anceſtors, and were rather Apoſtates then* Apoſtles (b). Can any man doubt of the power of Papiſts to make a Tranſubſtantiation, when we ſee with our eyes that they can turn every piece of wood into an infallible Doctor? I think I need ſay nothing for the confutation of Mr. *White's* argument, but barely repeat it, that the Reader may compare it with the ſtate of this age. It is this: The whole Church, or major part of it in every age were ſo knowing, that they infallibly underſtood all the doctrines of the foregoing age, and ſo careſull and pious, that they would not deceive themſelves, nor their poſterity. Anſwer the argument I need not, but only obſerve 3 things in this age, which will prove ἐφαλμοφανῶς not onely the poſſibility but a great probability both of miſtaking their anceſtors, and of deceiving themſelves and their poſterity. 1. Ignorance, 2. Careleſneſs and Profaneneſſe, 3. Scarcity of Writers. No man can adjudg Infallibility to ſuch an age, unleſſe he will offer violence to all his rational powers.

§ 17. 1. Here was groſſe ignorance in the generality of the Clergy, the Popes themſelves not excepted. *The whole world was overſpread with darkneſs, as thick as that in Ægypt,* ſaith *Baronius* (c). *It is reported, that at that*

(a) *Infelix dicitur hoc ſeculum, exhauſtum hominibus ingenio & doctrinâ claris. In Chronol.*

(b) *Pontifices à majorum virtute deſecerunt, Apoſtatici Apoſtaticive potiùs quàm Apoſtolici. ib.*

(c) *Orbis terræ totus tenebris fuit offuſus, Peccatorum fuit caligo, Ægypti penè tenebras ſuperans. in An. 974.*

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time there were no publick Schools, ſaith *Carolus Sigonius* (a). And the *Synodus Rhemenſis*, cited by *Baronius*, plainly ſay, *that at that time, it was reported, that there were ſcarce any learned men at Rome* (b). He that ſaith ſo ignorant an age could not miſtake, muſt needs be in a dream, and when he awakes I ſhall give him further anſwer. If any prudent man (who will not ſuffer his eyes likes *Sampſons* to be put out, that he may grind in the Pope's mill) reflect upon the ſtate of ſome ignorant Country-congregations among us, if he pleaſe to examine them, he ſhall find them ſo far from underſtanding infallibly the doctrines delivered by their Anceſtors and former Miniſters 20 or 30 years before, that they do not underſtand the opinions of their own age, no nor ſo much as thoſe which their Miniſter (though an able painful and plain Preacher, ſuch as were very few in that age) hath been preaching upon for diverſe years together. And yet (forſooth) a company of ſuch men as theſe (by Mr. *White*'s argument) are free from all poſſibilities of miſtakes what were the doctrines delivered by the age before them.

§ 18. 2. There was an univerſal careleſneſs and profaneſſe upon mens ſpirits. Neither Miniſters nor people did much buſy their heads about ſuch matters, but minded only the advancement of *their ſecular intereſt, and the pampering of their bellies*, (ſay their own Hiſtorians:) the Clergy then were univerſally negligent in teaching and inſtructing the people, (whoſe ignorance they ſaw moſt ſerviceable to their deſignes) and the people were as careleſſe to underſtand the concernments of religion. And if this very careleſneſſe and profaneſſe did utterly

(a) *Scholæ publicæ nullæ tum fuiſſe produntur*, De regno Italiæ c. 7.
(b) *Cum hoc tempore Romæ nullus pene ſit (ut fama eſt) qui literas didicerit.* Baronius An. 992.

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loſe and extinguiſh all the ſentiments and doctrines of true religion, delivered by *Adam* and *Noah*, in their poſterity, why might it not be ſo after Chriſt's time? Mr. *White* and his Partiſans venture their ſalvation upon the truth of this abſurd Propoſition: That it was impoſſible the ſame cauſe ſhould produce the ſame effects. Nor is it to any purpoſe that *Ruſhworth* alledgeth to prove the diſparity, viz. *That onely one man and one woman were witneſſes of thoſe high wonders (whereas the Goſpel had innumerable miracles witneſſed to multitudes of people in diverſe countries) that the hearers could hardly believe them, that they had but a ſleight care of recommending God's ſervice to their children, and that they were taken up with the worlds plantation, and other ſecular affairs: and there was no ſet form and inſtitutions of Prieſts and governours to joyne all nations in communion, no chief Biſhop* &c. Dialog. 3. §. 15. For 1. ſuppoſing that (which Divines generally believe) viz. that Adam truly repented of his ſin; it is contrary to common ſenſe to believe, that he who had ſuch a freſh knowledg and lively ſenſe of the difference between higheſt felicity and utmoſt miſery, ſhould be careleſſe in the concernments of religion; that he that had been the unhappy inſtrument of ruining all his poſterity, ſhould not uſe all poſſible diligences to heal the wound himſelf had made; and with greateſt inſtances and importunities indeavour the perpetuation of religion to his poſterity. 2. It is falſe to ſay there were then no Prieſts, no chief Biſhop to take care of religion: for though there were none that had the names, yet there were that had the office, and did the work, viz. the heads of families, and eſpecially the great and common Father and univerſal Biſhop of all mankind. And it is both againſt reaſon and experience and charity to think this natural Biſhop would take leſs care of the conſervation of Religion among his own natural children, then the Biſhop of *Rome* would do among his titular relations.

ſations. 3. As for the wonders of the Creation, they were ſo great and glorious, and innumerable, and at that time ſo evident and unqueſtionable, that it is the greateſt wonder of all how they could disbelieve them, or ſo ſoon wear out the memory of them; eſpecially when *Adam* lived above 900 years to demonſtrate the verity and inculcate the ſtory of them, whereas the Apoſtles were dead, and all the eye witneſſes of their miracles in a fourth part of that time. In a word, though it be eaſy in this, and all other reſemblances, to deviſe ſeveral diſſimilitudes and diſproportions, yet in the maine there is an agreement, That the careleſneſſe of poſterity may blaſt the moſt powerful and important Traditions. If it be further pretended, that there is a diſparity, becauſe God hath promiſed his Spirit to guide the Chriſtians into truth, and to preſerve them from miſtake: I ſhall only ſay two things, having fully anſwered this before. 1. Whatever promiſe or priviledge of the Spirit is made to Chriſtians, ſurely it is a moſt abſurd and unreaſonable thing, to pretend the donation of this priviledge, and the performance of this promiſe unto ſuch, as we have now deſcribed; concerning whom the Scripture expreſly tels us, *that they are ſenſual, not having the ſpirit*, Jud. v. 19. and *they cannot receive the ſpirit of God*, Joh. 14. 17. Where the Spirit of God is, it brings light with it, it turns men from darkneſſe into a marvelous light, it rowſeth men out of the ſleep of careleſneſſe, and makes them give all diligence to make their calling and election ſure. And therefore where ignorance and profaneſſe are allowed and predominant, (as apparently they were in this age) we may ſafely ſay, ſuch have not the Spirit of Chriſt dwelling in them, *for where the ſpirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, eſpecially that which is the principal part of it, a liberty from the bondage of ſin and Satan, by whom that age was ſo wofully captivated, that we need not many arguments to ſhew,

that they were not influenced by God's Spirit, but acted by the rulers of the darkneſs of this world, the ſpirit that now worketh in the children of diſobedience. 2. This is impertinent to the preſent argument, which is drawn not from the efficacy of a divine promiſe, but from the nature of the thing, and the common prudence of men, and that natural principle of ſelf-preſervation, (as you will plainly ſee, if you look back upon Mr. *White*'s words.) This argument proceeds as if it were morally impoſſible for men wilfully to deceive themſelves and their poſterity, which is not from the influence of a divine promiſe, but from an inſtinct of nature, and ſo this evaſion is inſufficient. To return therefore (having removed this rub out of the way) and to make good what I have ſaid concerning the careleſneſſe and wickedneſſe of the age, that this diſeaſe had overſpread the whole body Civil and Eccleſiaſtical, the Pope himſelf not excepted, you ſhall hear from the approved Authors of the Romiſh Church. *Platina* cals ſeveral of thoſe Pope's, *Monſtra & portenta hominũ*, monſters of men. *John* the 11th is called by Cardinal *Baronius* (one who, we may be ſure, would do the Popes no wrong, and the Proteſtants no right) *rather a defiler then ruler of the Romane ſeat* (a). *They were prodigious Popes*, ſaith *Genebrardus* (b). Pope *Sergius*, ſaith *Baronius*, was *a ſlave of all vices, and the wickedſt of men* (c). And of *John* the 10th he ſaith, *Then whom none was more filthy* (d). And ſuch characters they give to diverſe of the Popes of that age: and theſe are the ſupreme Heads of the Church, the prime ſubjects and fountains of Infallibility. And con-

(a) *Sedis Apoſtolicæ inquinator potiùs, quàm rector ad an.* 936.
(b) *Pontifices iſti prodigioſi erant. ad An. C.* 913.
(c) *Sergius erat vitiorum omnium ſervus, facinoroſiſſimus omnium ad An.* 908.
(d) *Quo turpior fuit nullus.*

formable

formable to the head were the generality of the members of that politick body, the miniſters and governours, (as well as the people) of that age, as you heard acknowledged by their own moſt approved Authors. Now compare this with their argument for Tradition, and you will be able to judg of the ſolidity of it. The two Pillars upon which the infallibility of the argument from Tradition is built, are theſe, (I ſhall give you them in the words of *Ruſhworth* in his applauded Dialogues 3. §. 15. 1.) *It was no hard matter for the Church to conſerve the truth of her doctrine, if ſhe were carefull; which hiſtories plainly bear witneſſe ſhe was.* 2. *That nature forceth men to have care of Religion, and therefore it was impoſſible any error ſhould creep into the Church.* And elſewhere ſaith he, *Nature permits not men to be ſleepy in Religion*, §. 8. To which diſcourſe I reply three things, which plainly evince the folly of this opinion. 1. That the infallibility of Tradition by theſe arguments depends upon the faith of ſome few Hiſtorians, whom all confeſſe to be fallible, which is a contradiction. 2. That the ſuppoſed carefulneſs (upon which the infallibility of Tradition depends) being the effect of that nature which is equally in all men, if it make any perſon or Councel infallible, it muſt make every particular Church, nay every Chriſtian infallible, (at leaſt ſuch as have common konwledge and prudence in them:) 3. Obſerve the impudence of this ſort of men, that dare avouch thoſe Hiſtories for witneſſes of the Churches care, which have ſo expreſly and unanimouſly recorded her careleſneſſe both in this and other ages. See ch. 4.

§. 19. 3. There is another thing very conſiderable in this matter, viz. There was a great ſcarcity of writers, which cuts the ſinews of that grand objection which they urge in all their Treatiſes; That there could be no change in doctrine without ſchiſm and a notorious tumult (as *White* ſaith:) and they prove there was no change, becauſe

we cannot ſhew the Authors, times, and places of them. (As if one that had got the plague, might ſay he is free from it, becauſe he knows not how, nor where, nor from whom he got it.) Now here appears the unreaſonableneſs of their demand and the abſurdity of their argument; how can it be expected that we ſhould give an account of all the occurrences and mutations of that age, when they confeſſe ſo few books were written, and thoſe that were, were written by ſuch as, were either wholly, or in part leavened with the corruption of the time, and therefore (for their own honour) obliged to conceal all ſuch changes and defections, as themſelves had an hand in. And if any reputed Heretick durſt venture to betray any of the ſecrets of the myſtery of Iniquity which was then working, his book was preſently ſuppreſſed, and he and it both confuted by an argument fetched out of the fire, or rather thrown into it. So the Papiſts do by us, as if a man ſhould blow out all the Lights, and then blame me for not finding what I was making inqueſt after; or as if one ſhould burn my principal evidences, and then charge me that I cannot make out my Title. And yet notwithſtanding all the frauds and force of the Romiſh Sea, God hath not left his Truth without witneſſe, nor us without notable teſtimonies, even from among themſelves, of the ſucceſſive depravations and corruptions in religion by them foiſted into the Church: but that hath been fully proved by others, and therefore I ſhall ſay nothing of it. I ſhall adde onely this, that although I have inſtanced but in one age, yet indeed there were ſeveral other ages overſpread with the ſame deluge of ignorance, and careleſneſſe, and looſneſſe, and conſequently lyable to the ſame miſtakes: ſuch as the age before the reformation of Religion was, and diverſe others, wherein learned men were thought to be Conjurers, and reading of Greek was counted as hard, as the quadrating of a Circle, and

skill

skill in the learned languages made a man half an heretick: and this all records are full of. I think I need ſay no more to prove the firſt branch, viz. That it was poſſible for ſome ages, or the major part of them to miſtake the mind of their Predeceſſors in matters of Religion. But I muſt not omit Mr. *Whites* animadverſion upon this conſideration, which he cals a *ridiculous cavill, and a ſlander ſo palpably abſurd, that he can ſcarce perſwade himſelf to think they that uſe it, are not rather blinded with malice then ignorance.* You will eaſily judg his reaſon runs low, becauſe his paſſion flies ſo high: and what is the reaſon of this clamor? why (ſaith he) *The Proteſtants acknowledge the doctrines (of the Romane Church) which they call errors, were already flouriſhing ſome hundreds of years before theſe times of Ignorance.* Apolog: for Tradition, Encounter 1. Shall I return Mr. *White* his own language? What ſhall I aſcribe this intolerable miſtake to? ſhall I attribute it to his ignorance? I cannot tell how to do ſo to one of his parts and reading. Dare he ſay that all the preſent doctrines of the Church of *Rome* were flouriſhing ſome hundreds of years before the tenth age, whoſe ignorance I have repreſented and proved? Or if he ſay and think ſo, yet dare he ſay the Proteſtants are of this mind, if he ever looked into any Proteſtant Author? Is it not evident to the whole world, that the Proteſtants do both univerſally deny, and ſolidly diſprove this audacious aſſertion, and evidently prove (even by the ſuffrages of learned Papiſts) the far later novelty of many of their errors? Shall I then aſcribe it to his malice? I am loth to do ſo: although none more frequently guilty of that crime, then they that moſt boldly charge it upon others. One may by this & ſuch like paſſages imagine, how vain a thing it is, to expect ſincerity and honeſty from theſe men in the handling of controverſies, when ſuch a one as Mr. *White*, (a perſon of more repute for candour and ingenuity then

moſt of their writers) ſhall not fear to aſſert in Print in the face of all the Proteſtant world, That *the Proteſtants do boldly acknowledg the Romane Church hath had univerſal Tradition for the whole body of its faith, ever ſince S. Gregories dayes, which is now a thouſand years!* then which nothing can be ſaid more notoriouſly falſe, and monſtrouſly abſurd. But againe, ſuppoſe the age moſt famous for its ignorance were after S. Gregories dayes, who knows not (that is not a meer ſtranger to all Antiquity and Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory) that there was in ſome ages before S. *Gregory*, at leaſt among the generality of Chriſtians and many Miniſters, ſo much ignorance, as might eaſily betray them to miſtakes in ſeveral doctrines, and pretended Traditions? And finally if all he aims at were granted, it ſignifies not much, and cannot pretend to prove any more then this, That in the firſt ages errors did not creep in at that door, which may be granted without any conſiderable prejudice to the Proteſtant aſſertiō, ſince in other ages moſt of their great errors might come in that way, and in all ages they might come in ſeveral other wayes.

§. 20. The ſecond Branch is this. That as ſome ages might miſtake the doctrines of their Fathers ſo they might knowingly deliver to their poſterity, not the doctrine they received from their Anceſtors, but ſome other. And of this many reaſons may be given, but I ſhall confine my ſelf to three.

§. 21. 1. It might be from Gods juſt judgment, giving men up to believe what was falſe, viz. That ſuch doctrines did come from the Apoſtles by their Anceſtors, which indeed did not. Nay what theſe men would needs perſwade us was impoſſible, the H. Ghoſt hath aſſured us is certain and future, 2 Theſ. 2. 10, 11, 12. *Becauſe they received not the truth in the love of it, God ſhall ſend ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould believe a lye:* a place more conſiderable, becauſe it is particularly levelled at the Romiſh faction,

faction (as might be evidently ſhewed, if it were not extravagant from my preſent buſineſſe. That the character here deſcribed ſuits with the quality of divers ages forementioned, viz. that they were ſuch, as did not receive the truth in the love of it, that they had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſſe, he that reviews what hath beeu here ſaid, will find no cauſe to doubt: and therefore that the judgment here denounced ſhould be inflicted upon them, is no more then what might be expected from the faithfulneſſe of God, and the uſual courſe of his providence. And if they might believe other lyes of greater importance, and more dangerous conſequence, why might they not believe ſuch a lye as this, viz. That a doctrine came from the Apoſtles, which indeed did not? And becauſe the generality of the forementioned ages, the Clergy and Popes not excepted, were apparently guilty of the ſins here deciphered, and conſequently obnoxious to the judgment here predicted; therefore it is intolerable impudence to aſſert, that thoſe men were infallibly guided into all truth, whom that God, who cannot lye, hath threatned to give up to believe lyes; of which this is not the leaſt conſiderable and dreadful, to believe ſuch perſons to be infallible.

§ 22. 2. The greateſt part of the Church in one age might knowingly recede from the doctrine of their immediate Anceſtors, and deliver another doctrine to their poſterity; becauſe they might believe, that the Churches and Fathers of the next foregoing age might fall into ſome errors: for that which is actually believed by Proteſtants now, might poſſibly be believed by the Fathers then, *Ab eſſe ad poſſe valet argumentum.* And this is ſufficient for the anſwer of this argument, and the defence of our cauſe: but *ex abundanti* I adde, That *de facto*, this was the faith of the greateſt part of the Church and writers in ſome ages, as I have already ſhewed out

of undeniable teſtimonies. To which I ſhall only adde 2 or 3 paſſages out of *Cyprian*, by which the Reader may evidently diſcern, how little weight was then laid upon (that which is now laid to be infallible) Tradition, and the teſtimony of the preſent Church. Tradition indeed was the plea urged by the Biſhop of *Rome* againſt *Cyprian* and the *African Biſhops*: now mark what the reply is. Two things *Cyprian* anſwers: 1. *That they of Rome did not obſerve all antient Traditions, and this* (ſaith he) *appears from their opinion about Faſter*: which, by the way, diſcovers the vanity of that ſuppoſition, which they lay as a baſis of the preſent poſition, viz. That the Church of *Rome* delivers nothing, but what ſhe profeſſeth to have received from her Anceſtors. 2. He anſwers, That *this was but a humane Tradition, and therefore not infallible*(a). And it is conſiderable, that he writes thus to the Pope, by which we may ſufficiently underſtand, what was *Cyprian*'s judgment, and the faith of that age concerning the infallibility of Tradition, as alſo of the Pope, and Church of *Rome*. And conformable to *Cyprians* was the deciſion of the whole Councel of *Carthage*, *When truth is manifeſt*,(ſay they) *let cuſtome yield to truth, and although hitherto none did baptize Hereticks in the Church, now let them begin to baptize them*(b). And in another place, *Cyprian* ſpeaking of the cuſtome of mixing wine and water in the Sacrament, hath theſe words: *Nor ſhould any one think that the cuſtome of ſome is to be followed, for we are to enquire whom they followed, for onely Chriſt is to be followed*: and he addes, *that we are not to regard what others have done before us, but what Chriſt, who is before all, firſt did; for we*

(a) *Epiſt.* 74. *ad Pompeium fratrem.*

(b) *Veritate manifeſtatâ cedat conſuetudo veritati, ut etſi in præterîtum quis in Eccleſia hæreticos non baptizabat, nunc baptizare incipiat. Opera Cypriani per Pamelium. p.* 402.

muſt

muſt not follow mens cuſtomes, but Gods Truth (a). And in another place he poſitively aſſerts, that *when any thing is out of order, the onely way to be ſatisfied is to go to the fountaine, to the head and originall of Divine Tradition, to Evangelicall and Apoſtolicall Tradition* (b). From all which it undeniably followes that *Cyprian* and his brethren, did not judge the Tradition of the next preceding Age Infallible, nor the Teſtimony of the preſent Church ſufficient, (as theſe Gentlemen now do) and conſequently thought it might introduce opinions contrary to what they received from their Anceſtors, when by theſe allegations it appeares as plainly, as if it were written with a Sun beame, they judged it lyable to miſtakes and errours; and this is the very Doctrine of the Proteſtants.

§. 23. 3. There might be an agreement and deſigne amongſt many perſons and eminent members of the Church, to corrupt the Doctrine received from their Anceſtors for their worldly intereſt and carnall ends, of which almoſt all Ages afford us wofull and innumerable inſtances. With the Readers leave, I will exemplify this Propoſition in a notorious inſtance, in a Doctrine of great concernment, (which is the *prora & puppis*, The foundation ſtone and corner ſtone of the Romiſh Religion, and if you will take *Bellarmines* word, neceſſary to Salvation) I meane the Popes Supremacy, I beg the Readers pardon, if I do a little more largely inſiſt upon it, then my manner is, becauſe the ſtory is remarkable, and ſtrikes at the root of this novel conceit, concerning the impoſſibility of a wilfull deception: Mr *White* tels us, the Church cannot be deceived in Tradition, and eſpecially the Church and

(a) *Non eſt quod exiſtimet aliquis ſequendam eſſe quorundam conſuetudinem, quærendum eſt enim quem ipſi ſuat ſecuti. —Nam non niſi Chriſtus ſequendus eſt—Non debemus attendere quid aliud ante nos faciendum putaverit &c. Epiſt.* 63. (b) *Ep.* 74.

Biſhop

Biſhop of Rome (who by the conſent of all the Papiſts have been the moſt faithfull conſervators of Tradition): The Papiſts generally agree, that they have an authentick and univerſall Tradition, on the behalfe of the Popes Supremacy, of which the right of appeales is a principall branch, and the greateſt evidence: And this Tradition (ſay they) came to them from the Apoſtles, by the Fathers of all Ages ſucceſſively. Well then, to come to the ſtory. In the year 417, There was a famous Councell at *Carthage*, (owned by *Bellarmine* and *Baronius* by the name of *The generall Councell of Carthage*) conſiſting of 217 Biſhops, among whom was *Alypius* and S^t *Auſtin*. *Zoſimus* being Pope at that time, ſends his Legates thither, and pretends a right of appeales from the *African* Churches to himſelf at Rome, and to make this good, he alledgeth for it ſome of the Canons of the Councell of Nice, for he aſcends no higher, the more ſilly wretch he! for if the Doctrine of the preſent Church of Rome be true, he might have brought that, which was more evident and irreſiſtible then 100 Canons of Nice, (which now all the World rings of, and all their diſcourſes are full fraught with) *viz.* The inſtitution of Chriſt, the ſupremacy of *Peter* devolved upon him, the univerſall Tradition of the whole Church. But of all theſe here is *altum ſilentium*. for you muſt conceive theſe were Arguments laid up in ſtore (like the Treaſure in St *Marks* Cheſt) for ſome high future exigencies, or wiſely reſerved for a ſeaſon, wherein the World ſhould wonder after the beaſt, and be moſt capable of ſuch impreſſions. Well, The Fathers conſider his Petition (for as yet the Popes were not maſters of their Art, and had not Learned their leſſon of *volumus, ſtatuimus, mandamus*) and marvell at the propoſition, and tell *Fauſtus* and his collegues, that they find no ſuch Canons in their Copies of the Councell of *Nice* as were alledged, and had indeed been forged at Rome (as is acknowledged

knowledged even by that Popiſh Councel of(a) Florence) Hereupon a motion is made and agreed, that they ſend forthwith to the Biſhops of *Conſtantinople*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch*, for their Copies of the Acts of that Councell. (A ſawcy trick it was not onely to deny the Popes Infallibility, but alſo to queſtion his verity) when they receive them, they finde that the pretended Canons were not there, and ſo conclude, there ſhould be no appeales from *Africa* to the Roman Biſhop: (A ſtrange boldneſſe in this Councell, to reverſe the inſtitution of Chriſt, and uſurpe upon St *Peters* juriſdiction, and provoke him upon whom they wholly depended for the Confirmation of all their decrees! it is great pitty they were not better adviſed: Well, you may imagine what ſad tidings this was at Rome: You will deſire to know what their Anſwer is, why then for your ſatisfaction, I pray you take notice: They have a Tradition at Rome, (it is part of that inſcription upon *Seth's* Pillars, erected before the flood, which *Joſephus* mentions, the Counterpart whereof they have in the *Vatican*) that when ever his Holineſſe is gravel'd with an hard Argument, and can do no good about the premiſes, it may be lawful for him, or others pleading for him, to deny the Concluſion: *Bellarmines* words are expreſſe: *The* African *Fathers were deceived through ignorance* (b). What pitty was it that *Bellarmine* was not their Secretary to informe them better? *The* African *Fathers did raſhly, and departed from the example and obedience of their Anceſtors*, ſaith *Stapleton* (c) q d. they

(a) *Nonne vides Reverende Pater ſummum Pontificem Zozimum falſum decretum & non in Synodo promulgatum ad tantum Concilium pro re tam magnâ miſiſſe!*

(b) *Africani Patres ignorantiâ decepti erant. de Pontif. lib. 2. cap. 25. §. Reſpondemus.* (c) *Patres Africani temere fecerunt & à majorum ſuorum obedientiâ & exemplis hac in re receſſerunt. in Princip. fid. con. 3. qu. 7. in ſolut. arg. 2.*

were

were naughty boyes and deſerved to be whipped into better manners- The more inexcuſable the Pope that did not thunder them into order by his Excommunications; But why do I mention theſe: Behold, a greater then *Bellarmine* or *Stapleton* is here; Enter *Boniface* the ſecond who thus VVrites in his Epiſtle to *Eulabius* (an Epiſtle owned for his by *Pighius*, *Lindanus*, *Sanderus*, *Turrianus*, *Alanus*, *Copus* and *Harding*, though *Bellarmine* being urged with it, pretends it is ſuſpected, but dare not ſay it is forged:) Aurelius *with his collegues* (whereof St *Auſtin* was one) *by the inſtigation of the Devill, began proudly to exalt themſelves againſt the Church of Rome* (a). So it ſeemes theſe Fathers were wickedly reſolved againſt the Supremacy of the Pope, with a *Flectere ſi nequeo ſuperos, Acheronta movebo*, and they, whom ſo many of the Learned Papiſts affirme to be infallibly guided by the Spirit of God, his Holineſſe declares they were acted by the Divell: By this time I hope the Reader, that is not wholly blinde, may ſee the vanity of this Argument from Tradition: Catholick Tradition is pretended at Rome for the Popes Supremacy and Infallibility: This Tradition with others comes to them by uninterrupted ſucceſſion from the Apoſtles, wherein (by the Argument I have now in conſideration) it was impoſſible for the Biſhops or Governours of the Church, either to miſunderſtand the mind of their Anceſtors, or wittingly to deceive their poſterity: That which they make impoſſible to be done, the inſtance propoſed diſcovers to be certainly done, it being impoſſible that the Fathers, ſhould make ſuch a decree, if they had not either been ignorant of ſuch a Tradition (as *Bellarmine* chargeth them) or wilfully and ma-

(a) *Aurelius cum Collegis, inſtigante diabolo ſuperbire contra Eccleſiam Romanam cæpit.*

liciouſly

liciouſly oppoſed it (as the Pope accuſeth them) And foraſmuch as theſe Fathers pleaded a Tradition directly contrary to that which the Romaniſts pretend *viz.* That there ſhould be no appeales to Rome, it irreſiſtibly followes that Tradition hath deceived, either them formerly, or the Papiſts at this day. I ſhall diſmiſſe this Anſwer with a remarke upon the whole matter, that if the Pope and Popiſh faction durſt for their own baſe and ambitious deſignes, uſe ſuch palpable forgery in a time of ſo much light, when they had ſo many diligent obſervers and potent oppoſers, I leave to the prudent Reader to imagine, what forgeries might be expected from them in after Ages, in times of ignorance and careleſneſſe, when all the VVorld was in a deep ſleep, and the Pope onely vigilant to improve all occaſions to his advantage, and had allmoſt all Princes and People in the Chriſtian VVorld at his Devotion. And thus much may ſerve for the ſeventh Anſwer, wherein I have been the more prolix, becauſe it ſtrikes at the root of the Argument, & not onely proves the poſſibility of deceit in Traditions, but alſo diſcovers the wayes and modes, by which miſtakes may be committed, and falſhoods introduced under pretence of Tradition.

I will adde but one thing more.

§. 24. *Anſw.* 8. and laſt. If the Tradition pretended, give us infallible aſſurance that the Doctrines of the preſent Church of Rome are come from the Apoſtles: then the Romiſh Church holdeth no Doctrines, but ſuch as they have received from the Apoſtles: But the Romiſh Church holdeth many Doctrines which ſhe hath not received from the Apoſtles: This I might take for granted, having allready proved it in that fundamentall Tradition of the Church of Rome concerning the Popes Supremacy: I might refer the Reader to what I have reported out of diverſe Popiſh Authors of greateſt note,

concerning

concerning their acknowledgments of their departing from the Doctrines and practises of the Fathers: and having said so much there, I shall content my self with mentioning two particulars: The first shall be (that which hath been more largely discussed *Chap.*3. whither I refer the Reader) about the Blessed *Virgins* conception in Originall sin. The present Doctrine of the Romish Church (or at least of the far greatest part and most eminent members of it) is for her immaculate conception, as I shewed before from the decrees of Popes and Universities, *&c.* and innumerable of their most approved Authors: How much this opinion was favoured by the Councell of Trent, sufficiently appeares from their Decree about Originall sin, (though cunningly and doubtfully delivered, as the Devils Oracles used to be) in which Decree, they declare that they would not comprehend the Blessed *Virgin*: The sence of which decree (according to that favourable glosse which Mr *White* puts upon it) was this, That the Councell did judge both opinions probable: Now from the businesse thus stated I gather two undeniable Arguments to prove the Fallibility of Tradition. 1. Tradition told the Antient Fathers that one of those opinions was positively false *viz.* That the Blessed *Virgin* was not conceived in sin: Tradition told the Councell of Trent that either of these opinions was probably true, which is an implicit contradiction. 2. Seeing in this hot contest not yet ended between the different factions of the Romanists in this point, both sides pretend Tradition for their contrary opinions (and both agree in this to hold nothing but what they have by Tradition) Therefore Tradition must needs have deceived one of them, *Ergo*, it is not Infallible To which I shall adde that the Doctrine which the most and learnedest of them hold *viz.* of immaculate conception was not received by Tradition from the Fathers, as I have shewed

ed from the ingenuous confeſſions of their moſt Learned VVriters, to which I may adde thoſe words of *Melchior Canus*, *That the Bleſſed Virgin was wholly free from Originall ſinne cannot be proved out of Scripture, according to its genuine meaning*: But that is but a ſmall matter to give the Scripture a goeby, let us ſee what he ſaith of the Golden rule of Tradition, therefore he addes preſently, *Nor can it be ſaid that it came into the Church by Apoſtolicall Tradition, for thoſe Traditions could not come to our hands by any other then thoſe Biſhops, and holy Authors which ſucceded the Apoſtles: But it is evident that thoſe antient writers did not receive it from their Anceſtors for then they would have faithfully delivered it to their poſterity* (a). And yet (if Mr *Whites* Diſcourſe be ſolid) in ſpight of your eyes you ſhall believe, not onely that no Doctrine is delivered by the Church of Rome which hath not been conveyed to their hands from Fathers to Children, even from the Apoſtles dayes, but that it was impoſſible any other Doctrine ſhould creep in.

The other inſtance is that of the *Canon* of the Scripture impoſed upon us by the Church of Rome, which they ſay is another Apoſtolicall Tradition, and yet their own prime Authors, confeſſe the moſt Antient Fathers to be on our ſide, at leaſt as to ſeverall of their Apocryphall Books: *Sixtus Senenſis* gives them to us in generall: *The Antient Fathers did hold the controverted Books to be*

(a) *Beatam virginem à peccato originali fuiſſe penitus liberam è Libris ſacris juxta germanum literæ ſenſum nuſquam habetur —— Nec vero dici poteſt per Traditionem Apoſtolorum id in Eccleſiam deſcendiſſe. Cum hujuſmodi Traditiones non per alios quam Epiſcopos illos antiquos & ſanctos Authores Apoſtolis ſuccedentes ad nos uſque pervenerint. At conſtat priſcos illos Scriptores non id à majoribus accepiſſe. Traderent enim bonâ fide & ipſi poſteris ſuis. loc. com. l. 7. cap. 3. concluſ. 4.*

un-canonicall

un-canonicall. (a). *Bellarmine* gives us *Epiphanius*, *Hilary*, *Ruffinus*, and *Hierom*; (b) *Canus* gives us *Origen*, *Damaſcen*, *Athanaſius*, and *Melito* (c) a famous and antient Father, who flouriſhed *Anno* 170, and was a man of great judgment and venerable Sanctity, ſaith *Sixtus Senenſis*, who purpoſely travelled to the Eaſtern Churches (where the Apoſtles had their principall reſidence and employment) to learne out the true Canon, and brings a *non eſt in ventus* for the Apocryphall Books, and returnes with the very ſame Canon which we own, ſo that in him we have the Teſtimonies of all thoſe flouriſhing and Apoſtolicall Churches, to which *Tertullian* directs us for the diſcovery of the Truth: Nor to this day have the Papiſts cited one Father or Councell, within the compaſſe of 600 (I think I may ſay a 1000) years, who did receive their whole Canon, and conſequently none of them (for ought appeares in their Writings) knew any thing of this pretended Tradition, but (as it ſeemes by the ſtory) when the Image of *Diana* dropt down from Heaven, ſhe brought this Tradition along with her: The like might be ſhewed in fundry other particulars: In the cælibacy of Prieſts, which is onely *de jure humano, not divine*, by the confeſſion of *Thomas*, *Durandus*, *Lombardus*, and *Scotus*, four principall pillars of the Papall Church, and *Turrianus* was noted by *Caſſander* as the onely man of all, both old and late Writers of the Popiſh party who maintained the *jus divinum* of it: But if it were an Apoſtolicall Tradition, it was *de jure Divino*, and the Councell of Nice would never have diſpenſed with a divine Injunction: So in the worſhipping of Images, Tranſubſtantiation,

(a) *Priſci patres Libros controverſos pro Non-Canonicis habuerunt Biblioth. ſanct. lib. 1. Sect. 1.*

(b) *De verbo Dei lib. 1. c. 20.* (c) *Loc. Theol. lib. 2. cap. 10.*

Purgatory,

Purgatory, and many other conſiderable points wherein I need ſay nothing, becauſe it hath been ſo fully cleared by diverſe Learned Proteſtant Writers, particularly, by *Jewell*, *Uſher* in his Anſwer to the Jeſuites Challenge, *Moulins* Novelty of Popery, *Dallæus* in ſeverall pieces, *Rainolds* de Libris Apocryphis, *Whitaker*, *Chamier*, and innumerable others: But *manum de Tabulâ*.

This I hope, may ſuffice for the refutation of this novell invention, concerning the Infallibility of Tradition, and the Teſtimony of the preſent Church, where I have been more large, becauſe it is a late plea, and leſſe hath been ſaid of it by Proteſtant Authors. And ſo it remaines unſhaken; That a Papiſts Faith hath no ſolid Foundation in orall Tradition, and the preſent Churches Authority, which was the buſineſſe of this Propoſition.

CHAP. 8.

Of Miracles, and the motives of credibility.

Sect. 1. BUt we are not yet come to the end of our journey; And although the Arguments urged by Proteſtants againſt their reſolution of Faith, have probably convinced the conſciences of diverſe of them, yet have they not ſtop'd their mouths. We have ſhewed in the former Chapters, how they have been driven from poſt to poſt, and as in a beſieged City, when the Walls and Works of it are battered down, they raiſe new fortifications, ſo having ſeen their former pretences batter'd about their eares, ſome of them have deviſed one ſhift more; for finding themſelves yet in that ridiculous Circle (of believing the Scripture for the

Churches ſake, and the Church for Scriptures ſake) notwithſtanding all the attempts of their Brethren to get out; Some of them have taken up their reſt in the markes of a Church and the motives of credibility.

This (though rejected by former and learneder Papiſts yet) of late hath been taken up by *Turnebull* in his *Tetragoniſmus*, a diſcourſe about the Object of Faith, and after him by the late Anſwerer of Biſhop *Lauds* Book, called *Laud's Labyrinth*, whoſe words are theſe: *We prove the Churches Infallibility not by Scripture, but by the motives of Credibility, and ſignes of the Church, which are theſe, Sanctity of life, miracles, efficacy, purity, and excellency of Doctrine, fulfilling of Prophecies, ſucceſſion of lawfully ſent Paſtours, Unity, Antiquity, and the very name of Catholick. Then* (ſaith he) *having thus proved the Churches Infallible Authority, and by that received the Scripture, we confirme the ſame by Scripture, which Scripture-proofs are not Prime and Abſolute, but onely ſecondary and* ex ſuppoſitione, & ad hominem, *or* ex principiis conceſſis *againſt Sectaries* (a). This is their plea, concerning which I ſhall need to ſay the leſſe, becauſe the Book wherein it is revived and urged, called *Labyrinthus Cantuarienſis*, is ſo ſolidly and Learnedly Anſwered by my worthy friend Mr *Stillingfleet*: Yet having finiſhed this Diſcourſe long before that excellent work came forth, and having twiſted it into the method of the preſent Treatiſe and deſigne, I thought not fit wholly to ſuperſede it, whereby the body of the work would be renderd lame and incompleat, but rather to be ſhorter in it, and as far as I can, to cut off ſuch paſſages as happily may be coincident with what is ſaid by Mr *Stillingfleet* in that particular; for I do not deſire *actum agere*.

(a) *Chap.* 5.

§. 2.

§. 2. *Anſw.* 1. Let it be obſerved, how ſhameleſſely theſe men abuſe their Readers, when they pretend the Infallibility of the Church is ſolidly demonſtrated from Scripture, (and this they generally do:) Here you have *reum confitentem*, they confeſſe the imbecillity of thoſe Arguments; For (ſay they) they are but ſecondary proofs, and *Argumenta ad hominem:* Now ſuch Arguments are not cogent and concluding in themſelves, but onely do conclude againſt ſome particular Adverſary from his own principles: So they acknowledge that although their Arguments may perſwade one that is docible, yet they cannot convince a gainſayer: And the ſtrength of their Argument depends upon the Courteſy of the Proteſtants.

§. 3. 2. In vaine are theſe Marks of a Church pleaded for the Infallibility of the Church of Rome, when other Churches have a juſter claime to them, and ſo little colour have the Romaniſts for their monopoly of them, that upon enquiry it will be found they have no conſiderable intereſt in them: This I ſhall ſhew in the principall and moſt important of them. 1. The firſt in dignity (though not in order) is the glory of Miracles: The moſt eminent in this kind are confeſſed to be thoſe which were done by Chriſt and his Apoſtles: Thoſe Miracles were done in Confirmation of the Doctrine of the Reformed Churches, not of the Church of Rome, which appeares thus: Theſe Miracles were done in confirmation of the Doctrine delivered in the Scriptures, but the Doctrine of the Reformed Churches is the Doctrine delivered in the Scriptures, and the Doctrine of the preſent Church of Rome is repugnant thereunto: *Ergo*, Theſe Miracles were done in confirmation of the Doctrine of the Reformed Churches: The *Major* our adverſaries dare not deny: The *Minor* hath been undeniably evidenced ſo much to the conviction of our Ad-

verſaries, that they dare not owne the Scripture for their Judge, and inſtead of ſubmitting themſelves to its ſentence, bend their wits to except againſt the judge, and decline its Tribunall, following that Counſell which was given to *Pericles*, when he was ſtudying how to give up his accounts to the *Athenians*, that he ſhould rather ſtudy how to give up no account at all: And ſome of them (whoſe words are recited in this Treatiſe) acknowledge the folly of their brethren, who would manage their cauſe by Scripture Arguments: But whether the Proteſtant Doctrine hath been ſolidly evinced from Scripture or not, thus much undoubtedly followes, that if any miracles be pretended againſt that Doctrine which Chriſt ſealed by his miracles, they are not to be regarded, and the miracles done by Chriſt *&c.* are infinitely to be preferred before them. And conſequently the glory of Miracles is more ours then theirs.

§. 4. The like I may ſay ſecondly, for the efficacy of Doctrine, which they ſo confidently appropriate to themſelves: But if the efficacy of their ſword were not greater then that of their Doctrine, the world would quickly ſee the vanity of that Argument: And how little confidence themſelves put in it may be ſeen by the profeſſed neceſſity of an Inquiſition. Next newes I expect is to hear this Argument pleaded on the behalfe of the Alchoran, I am ſure it may upon as good grounds, their religion being much of the ſame complexion, and the Popiſh cauſe being managed moſt commonly by *Mahumetan* weapons. But on the contrary let a man conſider with himſelfe, the miraculous ſucceſſe of the Proteſtant Religion in the late Reformation, how ſtrangely, ſpeedily, generally, it diffuſed it ſelf, in the very ſame manner as the Goſpell did in its firſt Plantation in the World, notwithſtanding the great diſadvantages it was to grapple with; the horrible ignorance and perverſeneſſe of the Age,

the

the mighty power of long cuſtome and inveterate prejudice, the craft of Polititians, the learning of the whole World, the might of Princes and Emperors, the threats, fires, inquiſitions of Perſecutors, the great offers and multiplied allurements to Apoſtacy; I ſay, he that ſhall review all theſe things (as they are recorded by the Hiſtorians of both parties) will quickly underſtand to whom this Character belongs.

§. 5. For the purity and excellency of their Doctrine: If their and our Doctrines were to be tried by that teſt, the controverſy would ſpeedily be at an end. The Word of God is the palace and rule of purity, and that Doctrine which hath moſt of conformity therewith, hath moſt of purity: Howſoever, it is too groſſe a begging of the queſtion, to alledge that for a note and evidence of their Church, which is more doubtfull then the Church it ſelfe: And for the Sanctity of their Lives, we are heartily glad to hear of it; if the reports were as credible as the newes is good, it would rejoyce our hearts, becauſe their own Authors in ſeverall Ages, have ſucceſſively acknowledged and bewailed, the horrible and univerſall wickedneſſe of their own Church, Clergy, Popes, *&c.* All ſtories are full of their monſtrous filthineſſe, though ordinarily masked under the pretence of externall holineſſe. And for the holineſſe of their Church of late times, I ſhall onely ſay this: Of all men they have leaſt cauſe to diſpute againſt *faith alone*, for he that can believe their ſanctity had need be a Solifidian, and have neither ſence nor reaſon: But you muſt know the Church of Rome lives upon her old ſtock, it is the holineſſe of their Anceſtors which they intend. *Bellarmine* is forced to go farre back for his proofs, for he alledgeth the Sanctity of the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apoſtles, Antients Fathers as arguments of their Holineſſe; ſo the Church of Rome is all on a ſudden grown Orthodox in the doctrine of

imputation, with this proviſo, that they allow the imputation of the righteouſneſſe of their Anceſtors to the preſent Church, but not of their wickedneſſe, you may as farre as you pleaſe even to *Adam*, nay, if you will, even to the Father of the Præadamitæ, impute to them the Holineſſe of their Anceſtors, but for the prodigious filthineſſe, the Sorceries, Adulteries, Murderers, Hereſies of their Fathers, and former Biſhops, and Popes, that ought not to be imputed to them.

§. 6. And for the other grand Character of conſent with Antiquity, which they vaunt ſo much of, among thoſe, that either have not learning to ſearch into the Antients, or wit to judg of what they read; to ſay nothing of this, that the hoary head of Antiquity is not to be reſpected, if it be not found in the way of righteouſneſſe; evill doctrines or habits, the more Antient, the worſe, and the inveterateneſſe of a diſeaſe, is no commendation to it: He that ſhall pleaſe to look into the Fathers with his own eyes, or peruſe the Diſcourſes of our Learned Authors upon this point, ſuch as *Rainolds*, *Jewell*, *Whitaker*, *Chamier*, *Dallæus*, *Albertinus*, *Uſher*, *Morton*, *Morney*, *Rivet*, and multitudes more, will ſoon diſcover the impudence of this plea; and the fruit of their labours would quickly appeare in the World, but for that piece of their impoſture, that as they deny the reading of the Scripture to lay-men, ſo they forbid the reading of our Proteſtant Authors to their Scholars, excepting ſuch whoſe conſciences they find to be of a Jeſuiticall complexion, and free from the hereſy of tenderneſſe.

§. 7. I know it will be ſaid, that we want diverſe of thoſe marks which they have, as Duration, Amplitude, Viſible ſucceſſion, Union among our ſelves and with the Pope: But allthough the Papiſts have no colourable pretence to thoſe Characters, among ſuch as will inquire into the verity of their Aſſertions, and not greedily

ſwallow

ſwallow down all of them; though in point of duration, divers of the moſt materiall Doctrines of the preſent Romiſh Church are ſo far from it, that they ſtand convicted of Novelliſme by the confeſſion of their own Authors: And for Amplitude; notwithſtanding all their intolerable boaſting with the credulous vulgar, the learned know, the Church of Rome containeth not one third part of the Chriſtian World: And for Succeſſion; their own Authors have acknowledged frequent and long interruption, yea even in the Papall See: Yet, if all that might be ſaid upon thoſe points were ſuperſeded, If they grant us, or we can prove the former, *viz.* That the miracles confirme our Doctrine, the Fathers profeſſe our Faith, that the efficacy, purity, and excellency of Doctrine belongs to us, we do not much matter the reſt, nor will the Reader who is ſatisfied in the former, be at all ſtartled at the latter.

§. 8. 3. Conſider what rotten Pillars moſt of theſe are, upon which the Church of Rome leanes, and you will find, they need no *Sampſon* to pull them down; one of them excepted, which *Bellarmine* therefore puts in the firſt place, and that is from the name of Catholick, as being grounded upon that infallible Maxime *Conveniunt rebus nomina ſæpe ſuis*: That therefore cannot be reſiſted. onely I blame *Bellarmines* overſight, that being ſo hard put to it, to prove the Sanctity of his Church, he did not prove it from the Title of Holineſſe given to the head of it: And then here had been a paire of Demonſtrations not to be paralleld in all *Euclid*.

§. 9. And for ſeverall other marks, there is this inexcuſable errour in them, that they alledge thoſe notes to prove the Church which are altogether impertinent and ridiculous, if you do not preſuppoſe the Church: ſo they wiſely ſuppoſe, what they ſee they cannot prove: I inſtance in Duration, Antiquity, Unity, Amplitude,

Succeſſion, againſt which I thus argue: Either theſe do prove the being of the Church where ever they are, and the want of a Church where they are abſent, or they do not; if they do not, then they are abſurdly brought to prove their Church; if you ſay they do, then where thoſe Characters are found, there is a true Church, and where they are wanting, there is no Church: But neither one, nor the other is true; not the firſt, for there is not one of thoſe now mentioned but have agreed to Pagans or Hereticks. Who knowes not the Antiquity, Duration, Amplitude, and Unity of the Pagan Religion? All thoſe were the Arguments of the Heathens againſt the Chriſtians, and the Papiſts have theſe arrowes out of their quiver: and to ſay truth, it is but reaſonable, that they that have borrowed ſo much of their Religion and Worſhip from the Pagans, ſhould alſo borrow their Arguments: for you know the acceſſary followes the principall. the onely wonder is, how thoſe Arguments which were weak and abſurd in the Pagans (and ſo judged and rejected by the Antient Fathers) are become ſtrong in the Papiſts? But I know a reaſon for that too. The Pope pretends to a Divinity upon Earth, and conſequently he can make weake things ſtrong, and as the Authority of the Romiſh Church is Infallible, ſo their Arguments are without all doubt irreſiſtible. VVho knowes not that the *Arrian* Hereſy overſpread the World? That the miſtery of iniquity which began to work in St *Pauls* dayes, was not to be finiſhed and deſtroyed untill Chriſts ſecond comming? 2 *Theſ.* 2. That there was a time when the whole World wonder'd after the beaſt.

And for the latter branch, who knowes not that the Chriſtian Church was a true Church when it wanted thoſe Characters, or at leaſt diverſe of them, when it was in its infancy, and therefore could not have Duration, when confined to a narrow roome *Act.* 1. and therefore had

had no amplitude? and conſequently, theſe are no neceſſary marks, nor certain diſcoveries of the true Church, as the Popiſh Doctors make their ſimple Proſelytes believe. So ſucceſſion of Paſtors ſignifies nothing, unleſſe you preſuppoſe the truth of the Church, whereof they are Paſtors: which forceth their own Authors to confeſſe, *that without true doctrine, there is no true ſucceſſion*: and that *a local ſucceſſion alone without a profeſſion of ſound doctrine is no certain note:* ſo *Stapleton* (a). And *Bellarmine* ingenuouſly acknowledgeth, *that this argument of Succeſſion is brought by them chiefly to prove, that there is no Church, where there is no ſucceſſion, from whence it doth not follow* (ſaith he) *neceſſarily, that the Church is there, where ſucceſſion is* (b): So if this argument ſhould poſſibly diſprove our Church, yet it doth not prove theirs.

§ 10. So for Unity, it is a ſhoe will fit every foot, and hath been urged by Pagans, (whoſe great argument againſt Chriſtianity, was taken from the diviſions of Chriſtians, and the unity of Pagans in their Religion;) and the Fathers anſwered the Pagans, (as we do the Papiſts) that as the Church of God is one, ſo the Devil's *Babylon* is one, as S. *Auſtin* expreſſeth it, and that Unity without Verity is not to be regarded. It was no argument of the verity and infallibility of the Jewiſh Church, that they were united againſt Chriſt: nor was it an evidence that the Church of *Corinth*, *Galatia*, and others mentioned in the New Teſtament were not the true Churches of

(a) *Etſi abſque vera doctrina non ſit vera ſucceſſio*: — Et poſt: *Sola loci occupatio non eſt certa nota, ut carnales Judæi de ſuo templo ſupponebant, ſed ſanæ quoque doctrinæ pariter cum loco profeſſio. Relect. con. 1. qu. 4. art. 2.*

(b) *Hoc argumentum probat non eſſe Eccleſiam, ubi non eſt ſucceſſio; ex quo tamen non colligitur neceſſariò ibi eſſe Eccleſiam, ubi non eſt ſucceſſio. lib. 4. de notis Eccleſiæ c. 8. §. Dico ſecundo.*

Chriſt

Chriſt, becauſe they were peſter'd with fearful diviſions, and worſe opinions, then thoſe which are owned by any Divines of the Proteſtant confeſſion. But if this teſt were allowed, if things be weighed, they would have little benefit by it. I know there is nothing more familiar with the Romaniſts, then to poſſeſſe ſilly ſeduced creatures with an opinion of their unity, and our diviſions: I wiſh the latter were not more evident then the former; God open the eyes, and humble and forgive thoſe, who by cauſing diviſions and offences among us, have laid this ſtumbling block in their way! it is no wonder, they that cannot examine things, are deceived with words. But if any diſcreet perſon look within the vaile, and compare their condition and ours, he will find, *Clodius accuſat mœchos*; and that they do, as if a man infected with a leproſy, ſhould reproach one who was troubled with the itch; or as if a man, whoſe hand was cut off, ſhould quarrel with another for having a ſcratch on his finger. As for our Churches, I know it is uſual for the Papiſts to charge us with the frantick opinions of Quakers, the deſperate hereſies of *Socinus*, and the like; but they would take it ill, if we ſhould charge their Religion with all the Blaſphemous, atheiſtical, heretical opinions of ſome that have lived amongſt them. Their own conſciences tell them, that theſe, though they are among us, yet they are not of us. He that would judge righteous judgment, muſt take his æſtimate from the publick confeſſions of the Proteſtant Churches, (whoſe Harmony is publiſhed and proved to all the world,) and ſuch of our learned Doctors as adhere to it, and there he ſhall find the diverſities of opinion amongſt us are onely in ſome leſſer points, happily about government, or other circumſtantiall things: but it is moſt certain, and undeniable, that all of them do hold the head, & agree in all the fundamental points of Religiō. But on the other ſide, what if there be cloven Tongues

in

in Proteſtant Churches? Is *Rome* a City at unity within it ſelf? How come we then to hear the noiſe of axes and hammers among the builders of their Temple? 300 differences have been collected out of *Bellarmine*'s words and works, and ſeveral of them of greater importance then any of our diviſions(a). It is true they have a pretty knack, when we tell them of their diviſions, they ſay, they are not in things *de fide:* I ſee, *Duo cùm faciunt idem non eſt idem.* It is a woful diviſion among us between Remonſtrants and Contra-remonſtrants: but the ſame difference among them, between Jeſuits and Dominicans, that is of no moment. Oh ye fooliſh Papiſts! how long will you be bewitched by ſuch ſilly impoſtures! how long will you love ſimplicity? So for that great diviſion among them, about the very foundation of their faith, (which is ten times more weighty then all the Proteſtant differences put together,) the Pope's Infallibility; they tell you, it is not *de fide*, although indeed it be their *fundamentum fundamentorum*, and their whole Religion hangs upon it, at leaſt in the judgment of all the Jeſuits, and the far greateſt number of the learned Doctors and eminent writers of the Church of *Rome* of this age. It is confeſſed by themſelves, that they are divided in this great point: ſo *Bellarmine* tells you: *The ſecond opinion is, that the Pope as Pope may teach hereſy; this opinion* (ſaith he) *is defended by Nilus, ſome Pariſians, as Gerſon, and Almaine, and Alphonſus de Caſtro, and Adrian the ſixth a Pope, in his queſtion of Confirmation.* So we have the infallibility of the Pope to aſſure us, that the Pope hath not Infallibility. *And this opinion* (ſaith he) *is not properly heretical, for we ſee the Church doth ſtill tolerate it; yet it is erroneous, and*

(a) *See* Pappus *his* Contradictiones doctorum Romanæ Eccleſiæ, *and Biſhop Hall's* Peace of Rome.

very

very near hereſy(a). I will tell you how near it is, when the Jeſuits have throughly leaven'd the world with that opinion, and perfectly deſtroyed the liberties of the Gallican Churches, and the Pope can do it without raiſing a commotion in his own kingdome, then you ſhall find this Embryo perfected, and it is become a compleat hereſie. In like manner ſaith Dr. *Holden*, ſpeaking of the Pope's Infallibility: *We ſee it is argued on both ſides by many moſt godly and learned Catholicks, both antient and modern, and neither part hath yet been cenſured, or prohibited, and therefore it is evident, no Catholick is bound to this or that ſide.* By which one inſtance you may ſee, how much reaſon we have to beſpeak them, as Chriſt did the Phariſees, Math. 7. 5. *Thou Hypocrite, firſt caſt out the Beam out of thine own eye, and then thou ſhalt ſee clearly to caſt out the mote out of thy brothers eye.* Thus we ſee when their pretended ſigns come to be examined, they are lighter then vanity, as we have ſeen by this ſhort and tranſient conſideration of the moſt and weightieſt of them.

§ 11. But, although other evidences are pleaded, yet the reſt of them come in onely as handmaids to the principal Character of miracles, for here it is that they ſet up their reſt, and ſo muſt I too for a ſeaſon. So the Anſwerer of Biſhop *Land*: *The Church is proved to be infallible the ſame way that Moſes, Chriſt, and his Apoſtles were proved to be infallible, and that was by the ſanctity of their life,*

(a) *Secunda ſententia eſt, Pontificem etiam ut Pontificem, poſſe eſſe hæreticum, & docere hæreſin: —hanc opinionem ſequitur & tuetur* Nilus, —*& aliquot Pariſienſes, &* Gerſon, *&* Almain, *nec non* Alphonſus de Caſtro, —*&* Adrianus 6. *Papa in quæſtione de Confirmatione.* Et pòſt: *Hæc ſententia non eſt proprie hæretica, nam adhuc videmus ab Eccleſia tolerari, qui illam ſententiam ſequuntur, tamen videtur omnino erronea, & hæreſi proxima.* De Pontif. lib. 4. c. 2.

and

*and the glory of their miracles. The works of Chriſt did of themſelves without Scripture prove Chriſt to be infallible, Joh.*5.36. *and* 10.25,38. *and* 14.11. *and the Apoſtles confirmed their words by ſignes. Mark.* 14.19. (a). And conſequently, the miracles done by the Church of *Rome* do without Scripture prove her infallibility. This is their laſt plea, they are now brought to their laſt legs; if this fail them, they are loſt.

§ 12. *Anſ.* 1. If the miracles of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles did prove their infallibility in the doctrine they delivered, then they prove the fallibility of the Church of *Rome*, and their actual error, becauſe they are viſibly departed from that doctrine; and if they prove any infallibility, they prove theirs, who adhere to the doctrine of the Scriptures. And ſo we thank them for this argument.

§ 13. *Anſ.* 2. Although where miracles are true, and many, and evident, and uncontrolled, they give a great ſtroke to the proof of that doctrine, which is confirmed by them, yet it is falſe to ſay, that Chriſt, or his Apoſtles did require an abſolute ſubmiſſion to, and belief of, every doctrine, upon the bare account of miracles, without any reference to Scripture. And it is moſt certain, that Chriſt and his Apoſtles (notwithſtanding their miracles) did prove their doctrines from, and allow their hearers to examine their doctrines by the Scripture. This ſtrikes at the foundation of their argument & plea, and therefore I ſhall endeavour thoroughly to prove it.

§ 14. 1. This appears from the expreſſe commands of Chriſt, and the Apoſtles to that purpoſe. In the ſame place, where Chriſt bids them believe him for his works ſake, he commands them to believe him for the Scriptures ſake, Joh.5.39. *Search the Scriptures*: And if the former

(a) *Chap.* 5. *of* Lawds *Labyrinth.*

prove

prove the sufficiency of their argument from miracles, why should not the latter prove the sufficiency of the Protestants argument from Scripture? especially, if you consider, that Christ apparently prefers Scripture arguments before that of miracles: for in that 5. of John, where he ascends gradually from the weakest to the strongest testimonies, he placeth them in this order. First, he urgeth *John*'s testimony, vers. 32. next, the testimony of his miracles, vers. 36. and last, the testimony of Scriptures, v. 39. And this more fully appears from Luke, 16. 29. *If they hear not Moses, and the prophets, neither will they be perswaded, though one rose from the dead.* Upon which words *Chrysostome*'s glosse is full and cogent, (at least to them who pretend to rely upon the Fathers authority, and exactly to maintain their doctrines:) his words are these: *That you may see, that the doctrine of the Prophets,* (and consequently of the Apostles,) *is more to be believed then the preaching of one raised from the dead; consider this, that every one that is dead, is a servant, but what the Scripture speaks, those things the Lord speaks* (a). Whence I thus argue: The authority of the Lord is not onely greater *in se*, but more credible *quoad nos*, then the authority of the Servant: This no man living will deny. But the authority of Scriptures is the authority of the Lord, and the authority of the Pope, (adde a Councel to him, if you please) is the authority of a Servant, yea (if you take that in earnest, which is intended onely for a complement) a Servant of Servants: *Ergo* the Scripture is more to be credited then the Pope, or Church. It was a

(a) Ἵνα δ' καὶ ἑτερώθεν μάθῃς ὅτι ἀξιοπιστότερα ἡ τῶν προφητῶν διδασκαλία τῆς τῶν ἀνισταμένων ἀπαγγελίας, ἐκεῖνο σκόπησον ὅτι νεκρὸς μὲν ἅπας δοῦλός ἐστιν, ἃ δ' αἱ γραφαὶ φθέγγονται ταῦτα ὁ δεσπότης ἐφθέγξατο &c. *Tom. 5. operum de Lazaro. concione 4.*

good

good turn for the Pope, that *Greg. de Valentia* hath assured him, that if the Fathers do at any time talke sawcily, *Sua tum constat authoritas Romano Pontifici*, i.e. The Pope will keep his authority and infallibility in spight of them: else I am afraid this passage of S. *Chrysostomes* might have done his Holinesse a discourtesy. And this farther appears from 2 Pet. 1. where you have the question expresly decided; for after the Apostle had confirmed his doctrine from that miraculous appearance of God in the Mount, and that voice from Heaven, he addes, ver. 19. *We have a more sure word of Prophecy.* The *Bereans* did not believe S. *Paul's* infallibility, barely upon the account of his miracles, (nor are they therefore blamed) but did examine his doctrines by the Scriptures, (and for that they are commended.) Act. 17. 11.

§ 15. 2. It was not the will of Christ, that all miracles should be believed, but he would have some miracles rejected: therefore he would not have all miracles in themselves, and for themselves, credited and owned. The Assumption I prove by three arguments.

§ 16. 1. Christ's will was compliant with his Fathers will, and he came to fulfill Gods word, not to destroy it: But this was the expres will of God, that all miracles should not be credited. This no man can doubt of, that reads Deut. 13. *If there arise among you a Prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign, or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to passe, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other Gods, —and let us serve them, thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet, for the Lord your God proveth you.* Whence it irrefragably follows, that if it could, without blasphemy, be imagined, that Jesus Christ had delivered such a doctrine as this, *Let us go after other Gods*, his miracles should have been disowned, and rejected, and therefore miracles of themselves are not to be credited.

§. 17.

§ 17. 2. Chriſt and his Apoſtles have foretold us, that miracles ſhould be done by the teachers of falſe doctrines: Therefore miracles in themſelves are no ſufficient evidence of the truth of a doctrine. The Conſequence none can deny. The Antecedent (which alone can admit of doubt) is ſo evident from plain Scriptures, that I need onely recite them. I will mention onely two places: 2 Theſ. 2 9. *The coming of Antichriſt is ſaid to be after the working of Satan with all power, and ſigns, and lying wonders:* and that you may ſee they are called lying wonders, not ſo much *ratione materiæ*, (becauſe they are fabulous, and pretended,) as *ratione finis*, (becauſe brought to confirme a lye,) it is ſaid Apoc. 13. 13, 14. That *he doth great wonders, ſo that he maketh fire to come down from heaven on the earth in the ſight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by means of thoſe miracles, which he had power to do.* I tell you, the world is well mended with the Church of *Rome*, that thoſe miracles, which in the Apoſtles dayes were foretold as a character of Antichriſtianity, are now become an evidence of Infallibility.

§ 18. 3. That evidence which Chriſt ſpeaks of, as common to himſelf and counterfeit-Meſſiahs, is no ſufficient evidence, nor at all to be equall'd with that evidence which is peculiar to the true Meſſias: But the evidence of miracles Chriſt ſpeaks of, as common to himſelf and counterfeit Meſſiahs. This is plain from Mat. 24. 24. *There ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets, and ſhall ſhew great ſigns and wonders, that if it were poſſible, they ſhould deceive the very elect.* The Scripture only is the ſure κριτήριον: and therefore, what Divines obſerve of the Spirits teſtimony, that it is alwaies conjunct with the teſtimony of conſcience, (and therefore it is not ſaid, μαρτυρεῖν, but συμμαρτυρεῖν) the like we may diſcern in this, That where Chriſt urgeth the argument of miracles, he doth it in conjunction with the Scripture, as we ſaw in Joh. 5. and

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the like we have Joh. 10. 25–38. where Christ pleads his works onely as they are done *in his Fathers name*, that is, not onely as he pretended his Fathers name, (for so did the false Christs Mat. 24.) but he really acted them with his commission, and in conformity to his will and word: So that the Scripture is the only σημεῖον, and not miracles in themselves, as this argument of the Papists falsly suppoſeth.

§ 19. *Anſ.* 3. If it were admitted, that miracles (and the like may be ſaid of all the reſt of their marks of a Church) do prove the verity of a doctrine, yet they do not neceſſarily prove the Infallibility of him that doth thoſe works, or receives that doctrine. Obſerve this, for it ſtrikes at the root of this their laſt pretence. The notes of a man may prove his manhood, but they do not prove his nobility, wiſdome, learning: theſe muſt be proved *aliunde* from another head. The Proteſtant notes of a Church do prove the being and truth of our Church, but not its infallibility; nor would they do it, if the Proteſtants pretended or deſired it, (for mens pretences, or deſires do not alter the nature of things,) I ſay, the notes do prove the Churches verity. But what are the priviledges of that Church ſo conſtituted in being, and whether Infallibility be one of them, that is another queſtion, and the reſolution of it muſt be fetched from another Topick: now that this is ſo, I ſhall plainly and briefly, and (if I miſtake not) undeniably prove. It is granted, that the gift of miracles was not peculiar to the Apoſtles, but was communicated by God to other Miniſters and Chriſtians in the primitive times: either then they muſt ſay, that every ſuch Miniſter and Chriſtian, ſingly conſidered, was infallible, (which no man ever yet was ſo impudent to aſſert,) or confeſſe, that miracles are no ſufficient evidence of Infallibility. It was enough that miracles did confirm the doctrines delivered, whether by

Apoſtles, or other Miniſters, for the confirmation of our Faith, (though they had been otherwiſe fallible.) But if they will do that which never man did, viz. aſſert the infallibility of every ſuch worker of miracles, then not only the Pope & Councels and Catholick Church are infallible, but alſo *Xaverius* the Jeſuite, (of whoſe miracles they tell us ſo many fine ſtories, though he himſelf in his Epiſtles ſpeaks not a ſyllable of them, and bewailes the want of the gift of Tongues, a miracle (if any) moſt neceſſary for the converſion of the *Indians*, I ſay, if their own relations of theſe miracles may be credited) he muſt be infallible. And ſo here is another article of the Popiſh Creed: for beſides the Infallibility of the Church, Pope, or Councel, here is the infallibility of the Jeſuites: *Non equidem invideo, miror magis.* Yet farther, if miracles were ſolid proofs of Infallibity, yet they prove it onely in ſuch perſons as do them; *Papæ nec ſcritur, nec metitur.* Why ſhould the miracles of *Gregory* of *Nazianzen* prove the infallibility of the Biſhop of *Rome?* or how come the miracles of the thundring Legion to prove the infallibility of the thundring Church of *Rome?* or by what Magical art do thoſe miracles, which left poor *Bernard* (that did them) fallible, paſſe over to *Rome*, and render his Holineſſe Infallible? The Jewiſh Church was not therefore infallible, becauſe the Prophets, who wrought miracles amongſt them, were thereby proved infallible: (nor do the Papiſts aſſert the infallibility of that Church, by vertue of ſuch a priviledge belonging to thoſe Prophets, but onely becauſe of that promiſe to the High Prieſt. Deut. 17.) In like manner, if their narrations concerning the miracles of S. *Francis*, S. *Dominick* &c., and if it were farther granted, that ſuch miracles did prove their infallibility, yet this would no way prove the Infallibility of the Romiſh Church in which they were done: ſo in diverſe reſpects you ſee the argument fals to the ground.

§ 20

§ 20 *Anſ.*4. Miracles are ſo far from proving the infallibility of the perſons that do them, that they do not ſo much as prove the verity of doctrines delivered by them. That miracles have been done, (or at leaſt ſuch things, as the ſtricteſt obſervation of common prudence could not diſtinguiſh from miracles) by hereticks, yea by pagans, is confeſſed by the Papiſts themſelves, and evinced by the known examples of *Veſpaſian*, (who cured a blind man, as *Baronius* himſelf acknowledgeth, and all Hiſtorians relate,) and *Apollonius Tyaneus*, and others. You may ſee how this troubles Card. *Bellarmine*, that he is forced to this anſwer, *That the Devil had poſſeſſed the eye of that man, that he might ſeem to cure, when he ceaſed to hurt: Mutato nomine de te Fabula narratur:* For ſo, whatſoever miracles are done, or pretended by the Papiſts for confirmation of the doctrines of Devils, (and ſuch are all repugnant to Scripture, and two of their doctrines are particularly ſo called 1 Tim.4 1,2,3.) may as well be ſaid to be done by the colluſion of the Devil. And yet (by the way) this is no blemiſh to God's providence to permit ſuch miracles, but an act of his wiſe counſel, and righteous judgment, that thoſe who will not be won by the Word, and thoſe glorious, abundant, and evident miracles done in the confirmation of it, may be hardned by other miracles, which (though far ſhort in number, and commonly leſſe notorious for obſervation, and leſſe beneficial for uſe) God permits to be done, and juſtly may; having forewarn'd the world of ſuch impoſtures, and foreſtall'd the minds of men with ſuch clear irradiations of his truth, and ſuch illuſtrious glory of miracles, that in compariſon of them, the following wonders were no more then the glimmering light of a Gloworm to the ſplendor of the Sun in his Meridian: Of which we have eminent Inſtances in the wonders of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, after *Pharaoh* had hardned his heart againſt the word of

God, and his glorious works, and afterward in the wonders of *Apollonius Tyanæus*, when men had wickedly rejected the offers of grace by Jesus Christ, and resisted the glorious light of his most excellent doctrine, and inimitable works. To make this more clear, I shall shew it under the hands of the greatest champions of the Romish Church. *Estius* writes thus: *The Fathers and Historians do every where witnesse*, (so that here you have a multitude of testimonies in one) *that true miracles may be done without the Church by false Prophets, Hereticks, and Schismaticks* (a): and he quotes among other witnesses *Hilary*, and *Austin*, and *Gregory* the great (a Pope, and therefore infallible in this assertion,) and a little after he doth so positively assert our doctrine, and so strongly batter down the pillar of the Papacy, that if you did not know the Author, you would judg him to be an absolute Protestant in that point: for after he had said, that *wonderful works may be done by hereticks, and Devils in confirmation of false doctrine*, he addes, *but against this deceit Christ hath forewarned his faithful ones, saying, Do not go forth, do not believe. It is to be noted, that he doth not say, Examine diligently whether they be true miracles; for the principal confirmation of the faithful ought to be the doctrine of the Church of old, confirmed by Christ and his Apostles by undoubted miracles* (b). And *Maldonate* (though as sel-

(a) Passim fatentur Patres, & testantur historiæ, fieri vera miracula extra Ecclesiam etiam à Pseudoprophetis, hæreticis, & schismaticis. in sentent. lib. 2. distinct. 7. § 18.

(b) Fieri possunt ab hæreticis & Dæmonibus etiam in confirmationem falsæ doctrinæ mirabilia: sed contra hujusmodi deceptionem fideles suos præmunivit Christus, dicens, Nolite exire, nolite credere. Notandum enim quod non dicit, Disquirite diligenter signa, num vera sint miracula: Nam præcipua confirmatio fidelium esse debet doctrina Ecclesiæ, jam olim à Christo & Apostolis per indubitata miracula confirmata. Estius ubi supra § 19.

dome

dome guilty of ingenuity, as most I have read) is forced to confesse, that *Hierom. Chrysost. Euthymius, and Theophylact. do prove by many examples, that true miracles may be done by unbelievers, and (saith he) Christ admonisheth us, that we do not believe false Prophets, even when they work true miracles.* So little reason had the Author of *Laud's Labyrinth* to call it *a strang Paradox, that true miracles may be marks of a false doctrine, and to say, that all Divines confess, that true miracles are not feasible, but by an extraordinary power of God, and that God thereby seales to the truth of a doctrine, chap. 9 sect. 5.* and then to run away, as if he had throughly done his work, when you see his bold assertion confuted by more learned persons of his own party. Then again the said *Maldonate* puts a question, *Whether no argument can be drawn from miracles, to prove the truth of a doctrine?* and answers, *It follows not, that no argument can be drawn from them, but no certain argument* (a); that is, the argument from miracles is next door to none, it is probable, but not undeniable, it is conjectural, but not certain. And yet these new Doctors dare lay the foundation of all, viz. the Churches infallibility, upon meer conjectures, and probabilities. One would think the Jesuit had borrowed this, as he hath done hundreds of his best passages, out of *Calvin*, and unadvisedly transcribed it into his commentary. And *Andradius*, the great defender of the Tridentine faith, is leaven'd with the same heresy: for he saith, *S. Augustine contendeth, that sure and certain tokens of the Church are to be*

(a) *Hieron. Chrys. Euthym. & Theoph. multis exemplis docent etiam per homines infideles vera fieri miracula. — Et monet nos Christus ne falsis Prophetis credamus, vera etiam miracula facientibus. — Gul. Averga nullum ad probandam veram doctrinam argumentum ex miraculis sumi posse? Resp. Non sequitur non omnino nullum, sed non necessarium sumi posse, in Mat. 7. 22.*

fetched out of the sacred Scriptures, because they are free from all suspition of falsehood: but miracles may be done by the help of the Devil (a). And *Gregory de Valentiâ* tels us plainly, *that miracles of themselves do not beget infallible certainty of the truth of a doctrine and Church, but on the contrary, the true and lawful Church gives us assurance of the truth of miracles, as S. Austin shews* (b). To conclude this answer, I shall onely adde *Bellarmine*'s words: *Before the approbation of the Church, it is not evident, nor certain, by a certainty of faith, concerning any miracle, that it is a true miracle* (c). And therefore the Churches infallibility cannot be proved by miracles, because it must be presupposed, before these miracles can give us any certainty.

§ 21. *Ans.* 5. If all the former difficulties were removed, it profits them not; for when a man comes to look into the pieces of their argument from miracles, he shall find such horrible mistakes, and woful impostures, that indeed it makes their cause the worse, and gives prudent men occasion to discern, that these are the Badges of the Antichristian faction, that they are the very signes, and lying wonders foretold 2 *Thes.* 2. I shall briefly look upon some of the parts of the argument.

1 They alledge for themselves the miracles of Christ, and his Apostles, and the first Fathers, which being done

(a) *Augustinus contendit Ecclesiæ certa atque firma indicia è sacris literis petenda esse, quia ab omni sunt falsitatis suspitione libera. Nam tum miracula —— Dæmonum operâ fieri posse dicat ——* Def. fid. lib. 2. p. 239.

(b) *Ipsa per se miracula non efficiunt certitudinem infallibilem de veritate doctrinæ, & de Ecclesiâ legitimâ, sed contrà potius Ecclesia vera & legitima certos nos de veritate miraculorum facit, ut Aug. indicat tom.* 3. *disp.* 1. *qu.* 1. *punct.* 4. §. 3.

(c) *Ante approbationem Ecclesiæ non est evidens aut certum certitudine fidei de ullo miraculo, quòd sit verum miraculum.* lib. de notis Ecclesiæ. c. 14.

in

in confirmation of a doctrine (as repugnant to theirs as Heaven is to Hell) are ſo far from proving their Infallibility, that they demonſtrate their falſhood and hereſy.

2. They plead all thoſe miracles as teſtimonies to the preſent doctrine of the Romiſh Church, which were done by ſuch, as though they lived in the communion of the Church of *Rome*, yet did complain of their corruptions, and condemn diverſe of their preſent doctrines: as appears in *Bernard*, particularly in the great doctrine of Merit.

3. They alledge ſuch miracles, as were done by Papiſts, in order to the converſion of Heathens to Chriſtianity, which if really done by the cooperation of the divine power, do prove no more but this, That God thereby bare witneſſe to the common cauſe of Chriſtianity, (for confirmation whereof ſuch miracles were done,) and not to their particular opinions, wherein they ſtand divided from other Chriſtians.

4. They alledge ſuch miracles, as for the generality of them, their own Authors (ſuch of them as have not ſacrificed to Impudence) acknowledg to be fictitious and ridiculous. What ſhould I tell you of that known cenſure of *Melchior Canus*, concerning the Legends of the Saints, (which are the great treaſuries of Popiſh miracles, and received by the poor beſotted Papiſts with the ſame veneration, as the four Goſpels) That *the lives of the Saints were written with leſſe integrity and faithfulneſſe, then the lives of the Heathen Emperors were written by Heathen authors* (a). A dear ſentence! it coſt him the loſs of a Car-

(a) *Dolenter hoc dico, —— multò à Laertio ſeveriùs vitas Philoſophorum ſcriptas, quàm à Chriſtianis vitas ſanctorum. —— Noſtri plerique (Scriptores) vel affectibus inſerviunt, vel de induſtriâ quoq; multa confingunt, ut eorum me nimirum non ſolùm pudeat, ſed etiam tædeat. Canus in operibus lib. 11. c. 6. pag. 533.*

dinals Cap. Agreeable to this was that of *Vives*, that *the Legends were written by a man of a Brasen forehead, and a Leaden wit.* I shall forbear further particulars, for it were endlesse to enumerate all the complaints amongst their own Authors, (in whom there were any relicks of candor and conscience) of the fictions in this kind, and the many notable instances of those impious frauds discovered upon the reformation of Religion, which before that time, were reputed such certain miracles, that it was sufficient to make a man an Heretick to doubt of the truth of them. I shall adde onely this, that our Adversaries could not possibly do a greater spight to Christianity, nor a greater dishonour to those illustrious and unquestionable miracles done by Christ and his Apostles, in the face of all the world, so as their greatest enemies were forced to acknowledge the verity of them, then to compare with them, and equal to them, their fabulous relations concerning some seeming wonders, commonly done in a corner, and by such who served their own interest in them, and whose evidence was so dark, that the truth of them was questioned by their own friends, as you have now heard: as if their design were to make good that passage of one of their holy Fathers, who called the Gospel, *Fabula Christi*, the fable of Christ, in that known expression, *How great riches hath this Fable of Christ procured vs!* But if every syllable of what their Fabulists have recorded of their miracles were true, it will stand them in little stead, for the reasons before alledged, and proved. And therefore I conclude, that the miracles pretended, or done by Papists, are no certain and sufficient evidence of their Infallibility, and no solid foundation for their Faith.

§ 22. *Ans.* 6. To which I shall onely adde this word at parting, that if miracles must passe for arguments, I know no reason, but Protestants have as good a Title to them

them as the Church of Rome: For although we do not use to boast of wonders, nor indeed have any need to use that Argument, having such solid evidence and sufficient ground for our Faith in the Holy Scriptures, yet if our adversaries will force us to it, I think our plea is as just as theirs, and we could very easily fill a Volume, not with such fictitious narrations, as they stuffe their Legends with, but with undoubted Histories of Protestant wonders. If the Antients esteemed the first propagation of Christianity by such contemptible meanes against such potent and universall opposition, an eminent miracle; why may we not reckon this for a miracle, that the reformation of Religion should be carried on by a despicable Monk in despight of all the power, policy, cruelty, flattery, learning of the last Age? we can tell them of miraculous cures of Diseases, and dispossessions of Devils by the Prayers of Gods people, of certaine prædictions of future contingencies by Protestant Ministers, of miraculous preservations and deliverances of Protestant Princes and Ministers from the bloody rage and deep designes of Papists, of eminent and unusuall judgments of God upon Popish Persecutors, of all these there are remarkable instances already extant in Print, and such as the Papists were never able to disprove to this day: so that the Protestant cause is not inferiour to the Romish in this particular, but onely here are two things evident in Protestants which are not so in their Adversaries, *viz.* 1. The Modesty of the Protestants that they do not boast of what they might justly plead. 2. The *Autarcia*, or self sufficiency of the Protestant cause, that hath evidence enough in Scripture, and hath Arguments enough, and to spare, whereas the penury of the Popish cause forceth them to catch at shadowes for want of substance.

§. 23. Thus I have considered the severall pretences of their great Doctors, and all the Pillars upon which this vast

vaſt ſtructure of the Churches Infallibility depends: I have ſtated the ſeverall pretenſions in the words of their own moſt approved Authors: I have weighed (I think I may ſay) all their conſiderable Arguments by which they ſeek to maintaine them, in the ballance of the Sanctuary, and have found them light: I ſhall cloſe this particular with a brieſe reflection upon the whole matter, and the diverſe and repugnant courſes of their Learned Authors in the reſolution and foundation of their Faith; wherein we ſhall ſee theſe miſerable creatures running (like the falſe Prophet in *Jeremy*) from chamber to chamber to hide themſelves.

1. They made a bold venture at Scripture, and fairly offerd to try their cauſe by it, for which they deſerve this Motto---*Magnis tamen excidit auſis*: But their own brethren pull'd them by the eare, and told them that would not do their work. *Gainſayers can never be convinced out of Scripture, therefore you muſt confound them with Tradition*, ſaies their great *Salmeron* (a): And they ſoone found that to be true which once a Popiſh Clergy man ſaid when he had found a Bible; *He knew not who was the Author of it, but ſure he was, it was ſome peſtilent Heretick, for he every where condemnes the Doctrines of our Church.*

2. They fly to the Fathers and their Infallible Authority: There upon a faire triall, they are beaten out of the field: Upon debate they find the Fathers ſo ἀλλοφρόσυνους, ſo uncertaine in ſome things, ſo poſitive againſt them in other things, that they preſently cry *Crucifige* to thoſe, whoſe ears had rung with *Hoſanna*'s before, and down goes the Infallibility of the Fathers and to fetch in miracles, that they may not want Arguments.

(a) *Proter vere volentes Scripturis refelli non poſſunt, ideo unâ Traditione jugulandi ſunt. Salmeron in Tom. 13. lib. 1. comment. ſuper Epiſtolam Paulis.*

3. Then

3. Then they flie to Councels, and by all meanes they muſt be Infallible; well, the Proteſtants follow them thither: That point comes to be ſcann'd. Inſtances are given of the errours of Councels (if either Papiſts or Proteſtants may be Judges:) And (which had the greateſt hand in the depoſing of Councels) ſeverall notable paſſages are alleadged out of Councels againſt the Popes Supremacy, and diverſe of the preſent Doctrines of the Romiſh Church: And upon the hearing of the cauſe, the Pope himſelfe, and the moſt of the learned and conſiderable Papiſts now in the World are reſolved to truſt Councels no longer with this jewell, and not content to deny, they diſpute down the Infallibility of Councels, as I have ſhewed.

4. Then they flie to the Pope for help, and Jeſuites cry out εὕρηκα, They have found the man that is infallible: Now *ſaltat ſenex, ſalva res eſt*, well the Proteſtants joyne iſſue with them upon that, give many ſhrewd inſtances of the errours of Popes, alledge the expreſſe words of *Adrianus Sextus*, a Pope confeſſing the Fallibility of Popes, (whom *Bellarmine* himſelfe reckons among thoſe who hold that the Pope may be an Heretick and teach Hereſy (a)) And beſides all this, two Popiſh approved Councels are pleaded, *viz.* *Conſtance* and *Baſil*, who abſolutely deny the Popes Supremacy and Infallibility. Well, what ſhall they do next?

5. Then there muſt be another device, a coalition of Pope and Councell, and thoſe meeting together are Infallible.

Thus Infallibility is but a ſhort-lived buſineſſe, and dies at the expiration of the Councell (for when they are diſſolved, their Writings as well as thoſe of Holy

(a) *Lib. 4. De Romano Pontifice cap. 2. §. ſecunda ſententia.*

Scripture

Scripture are uncapable of being a judge). And thus they have devised an Infallibility, made of a commixtion of two Fallibles (an ingenious invention it is by which one may make an infinite of two finites, and of two guilty persons make up one innocent) But this also is destroyed by themselves: For although the divided parties seem to patch up an Agreement, yet indeed they are as much at variance as ever; For the Jesuites make the Pope alone Infallible (and the Councell onely in dependance upon him) And their Adversaries ascribe this Infallibility to the Councell alone, (and to the Pope onely by communication from them.) And so they are both gone by the Arguments allready mentioned under each of those heads. And if we may believe either, there is security in neither. And besides all these, diverse of their late Learned Writers reject the Infallibility both of Pope and Councels, as *White, Holden, Cressy, Sr Kenelme Digby*, &c. who assert, that neither one nor other, are further Infallible; then they keep to the Golden rule of Tradition, and in that sence every Christian (*viz.* so farre as he keeps to Tradition) is Infallible.

6. The next devise is orall Tradition, and the Authority of the present Church, who are therefore right, because they say so: So this is a confirmation of their Faith answerable to his confutation, who answered all *Bellarmines* works with saying *Mentiris Bellarmine? Bellarmine* thou liest: In like manner do these men confute all the Protestant Writers, and maintaine their own Tenets, by saying, *recte dicis Domine Papa* or *mater Ecclesia*, That the Pope and present Church are in the right. Thus their bare assertion must passe for a solid demonstration, & their pretence that they hold nothing, but what they had frō the Apostles, must be admitted as a proof that it is so, & shadowes must go for substances: But this besides the ridiculousnes of begging the questiō, & craving what they cānot prove

prove, is denied by the greateſt Pillars of their own Church, and ſuch as with whom the Authors of this new and wild fancy, will not compare themſelves, either for number or quality: For this is the known and moſt approved Doctrine of the Church of Rome, That Tradition and Scripture both are two dead letters, and partiall rules, and there is beſides theſe required a living judge indued with ſupreme and infallible Authority; and without this judge we cannot infallibly underſtand, and are not bound to receive and believe either the one or the other.

7. At laſt they are ſo hard put to it, that they cannot leap out of the Circle, nor extricate themſelves out of that Labyrinth in which their conceit of Infallibility hath involved them, without Miracles: In come the marks of the Church and the glory of Miracles: And thus farre I ſhall diſcharge them from that invincible difficulty of proving the truth of their moſt famous miracles, for if they can prove the Infallibility of their Church, I will give it under my hand that they can worke a Miracle: for then they can reconcile contradictions, and they can do that which the ineffectuall eſſayes of all their greateſt wits have ſhewed to be above the wit of man, or Devill either, (for doubtleſſe thoſe Popes who had familiar acquaintance with the Devill, would not faile to take in his advice and aſſiſtance for the defence of their Infallibility) and therefore muſt needs be acknowledged for θαυματουργοι or workers of Miracles: Thus I have diſpatched their ſeverall pretences, and ſhewed the nullity of them all, and conſequently the nullity of their Faith:

§.24. There is onely one thing to be added: They have one Argument more, which (although if their other cords break, they acknowledg this will not hold, yet becauſe they uſe much to inſiſt upon it) I ſhall conſider in a few words: And that is an Argument taken from the providence

vidence of God, and his care over the Church: It is fit and neceſſary (ſay they) that there ſhould be ſome Infallible Judge that could finally end all Controverſies, and therefore there is ſuch an one, and they are that Judge. I know no man in the world can leap further at three jumps. 1. There ought to be. 2. There is an Infallible Judge. 3. Their Church is it.

§. 25. *Anſw.* 1. Why may not I turne their Argument upon them? God hath not provided ſuch a judge, *Ergo* ſuch a judge is not neceſſary. VVhen God thought fit to appoint a judge for the deciſion of ſome controverſies in the Old Teſtament, he thought fit to expreſſe, the perſon, the place, his work, his power: And if the Popiſh doctrine be true, that this Judge is of ſuch neceſſity, that without him we cannot underſtand, and are not bound to believe the Scriptures to be the word of God, and that ſubmiſſion to this Judge is neceſſary to Salvation; it is ten thouſand times more incredible that God (to whom all our preſent controverſies were not unforeſeen) ſhould not leave us ſome mention of it in thoſe Scriptures which are writ ten for this end *that we might believe*, Joh. 20. 31. *and that we might be made wiſe unto Salvation*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. Then that ſuch a Judge is neceſſary: If God had but ſaid inſtead of Tell the Church, Tell the Biſhop of Rome, or heare the Biſhop of Rome in all things, all thoſe infinite and dreadfull diſtractions, diviſions, perſecutions, errours and miſchiefes, which have ſince riſen in the world had been prevented: So if reaſon may be judge, who can believe it conſiſtent with the goodneſſe of God or Chriſts care over his Church, or Gods deſigne in giving the Scriptures, to omit ſuch a neceſſary point as this, upon which all the reſt had depended: eſpecially when Doctrines of far leſſe concernment are there plainly recorded and often repeated?

§. 2.

§. 26. *Anſw.* 2. If once men ſuffer their underſtandings to mount ſo high as to teach God what is fit, and poſitively to conclude that to be done which they judge fit to be done: It opens a gap to Atheiſme and to all imaginable Superſtition: What a fine modell of Divinity ſhould we have if once this doore were open'd? It was fit that all the Tranſlators of the Bible ſhould have infallible guidance, that they might not miſtake in a letter: It was fit that the Doctrine of the Popes Supremacy and Infallibility ſhould have been ingraven upon every mans heart, or at leaſt plainly revealed in the Bible, this being of more uſe then all the Bible beſides; (ſince the Pope could have ſupplied the want of a Bible) And as *Chillingworth* well argues, it was as fit that every Miniſter ſhould have been Infallible; that all the Popes ſhould be free from groſſe wickedneſſe; (as all other infallible perſons recorded in Scripture were) It was fit that obſtinate Hereticks ſhould be conſumed with fire from Heaven: Therefore by this Argument all theſe things are done, how much better and more becomming is it for a Chriſtian to ſay with the Apoſtle, *who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counſellor?* Rom. 11. 34. Then boldly to meaſure God by our own fancies, and tie him to our fond imaginations.

§. 27. 3. If it be granted that there is an Infallible judge, yet it doth not their work, for particular Chriſtians are not Infallibly aſſured of the Infallibility of their Church, (unleſſe they will ſay that every Papiſt is Infallible) And therefore no particular Papiſt hath better ground for his Faith upon this ſcore then the Proteſtants have: for they neither have, nor pretend to better Arguments, upon which they believe their Church to be this Supreme and Infallible judge, then what Proteſtants alledge to prove the Scripture to be judge, *viz.* Texts of Scripture, Tradition, Fathers, Councels, Miracles, rationall Arguments,

Arguments, &c. And if a Proteſtant may be deceived in theſe when he inferres from them the Infallibility of the Scripture, why may not a Papiſt be deceived when he inferres from them the Infallibility of his Church, ſince he hath no better Arguments, nor more Infallible guidance? And therefore as to particular Chriſtians (of whom the whole Church conſiſts, and about whom alone the care of Chriſt and Gods Providence is exerciſed) God hath not taken more effectuall care for their infallible guidance according to the Romiſh Principles then according to ours: For as they ſay, Proteſtants have no ſecurity for their Faith, though the Scripture be Infallible, becauſe they cannot Infallibly underſtand it, or believe this to be the Scripture: ſo ſay I, the Papiſts have no ſecurity of the Infallibility of their Church (though the Churches Infallibility be acknowledged true in it ſelf) ſince they cannot infallibly know either that there is ſuch an infallibility, or theirs to be the Church to whom it is promiſed.

§. 28. 4. It is neither neceſſary, nor ſuitable to the methods of Gods Providence and the declarations of his will, that there ſhould be a finall end and infallible judge of all controverſies in this life: That which theſe men tell us was fit to be done, God hath told us he did not judge fit (and who is moſt credible do you judge) 1 Cor. 11. 19. *There muſt be Hereſies—that they which are approved may be made manifeſt.* God hath acquainted us, that it is his pleaſure that Tares ſhould grow with the Wheat unto the end of the World. In reſpect of wicked men it was fit (in regard of Gods Juſtice) that there ſhould be ſtones of ſtumbling and Rocks of offence, for the puniſhment of thoſe that were diſobedient: And in regard of elect and ſincere Chriſtians, who live holily, and humbly believe, and pray fervently, and ſeek the true way diligently, ſuch a judge is not neceſſary, God having provided for them

them other wayes, by giving them the promiſe of his Spirit, and guidance into Truth (which is as good ſecurity as the Pope himſelfe hath, or pretends for his ſuppoſed Infallibility) by that anointing which teacheth them all things, 1 *Joh.* 2.27. in confidence of whoſe conduct they may ſay with *David: Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſell and afterwards receive me to Glory*, Pſal.73.24. They are kept by Gods power, 1 *Pet.* 1.5. and the care and ſtrength of Chriſt, *Joh.* 10. And what need a Chriſtian deſire more? Truly ſaith *Ameſius*, *God hath provided for the ſafety of the Godly, not for the curioſity or perverſneſſe of other men.* And therefore this plea muſt go after all the reſt, and they are ſtill left in a Forlorne and deſperate, becauſe in a faithleſſe condition: And thus having forced my way through all the obſtructions which they laid before us: I know not what hinders, but I may pronounce the ſentence, notwithſtanding all their big looks and glorious pretences of Infallibility, notwithſtanding all the noiſe of Scripture, Fathers, Popes, Councels, Tradition, Miracles; when things come to be ſcanned, it appeares they have no foundation for their Faith, and conſequently have no Faith. Lord be merciſull to them.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Solidity of the Proteſtants foundation of Faith.

§. 1. HAppily they will ſay of us, as *Jerome* did of *Lactantius*, that he could *facilius aliena deſtruere, quam ſtabilire ſua*, that we can more eaſily overthrow the foundation of their Faith, then make our

own good: I ſhall therefore (though it be beſides my preſent deſigne, which is onely to undeceive the World in that great cheat of Infallibility) in few words enquire whether the Proteſtants have not a better and more ſolid foundation of their Faith, then the Papiſts have: And this I ſhall ſhew onely by one Argument.

The Popiſh foundation of faith is ſuch, as many of their own great Doctours are unſatisfied in, (There being no foundation laid by any of them, but it is both denied, and diſproved by others, no leſſe eminent of their own communion, as I have proved at large and ſuch as is unanimouſly oppoſed by all Proteſtants and ſolidly diſproved) But the Proteſtant foundation of Faith is ſuch as all Proteſtant Churches (of what denomination ſoever) are agreed in, yea ſuch as diverſe of our moſt learned Adverſaries acknowledge to be ſolid and ſufficient. You will ſay if you can prove this, the controverſy will be at an end, and if I do not, let the Reader Judge. There are but three things that need proof. 1. That the Books of Scripture (which Proteſtants build their Faith upon) are, and may be proved to be the word of God. 2. That in the ſubſtantials of Faith, theſe Books are uncorrupted. 3: That the ſence of Scripture may be ſufficiently underſtood in neceſſary points.

§.2. For the firſt: That the Proteſtants Bible is, and may be proved to be the word of God: It is true, when they meet with any of our Novices they uſe to put this perplexing queſtion (as they call it) to them, How know you Scripture to be the word of God? what matters it how I know it, ſeeing they acknowledg it, and by granting the thing make their queſtion ſuperfluous? But I Anſwer, I know it even by the Confeſſion of our Adverſaries: So they acknowledge and own the verity and ſolidity of our foundation, and the teſtimony of an adverſary againſt himſelf is undeniabe; It may be of good

uſe

uſe here a little to compare the ſeveral diſcourſes of learned Papiſts to different perſons, and how prettily they contradict themſelves, and confute their own arguments. When the Papiſts diſpute againſt us, they tell us, It is impoſſible to know the Scripture to be the word of God, but by the Churches Teſtimony. But if you take them in their lucid intervals, and their diſputes againſt Atheiſts, or Heathens, then you ſhall have them in another tune: then *Bellarmine* can ſay, *Nothing is more evident, and more certain then the ſacred Scriptures, ſo that he muſt needs be a very fool that denies faith to them* (a). Here he can furniſh us with ſeveral arguments to prove the authority of the Scripture (diſtinct from, and independent upon the Churches authority,) the verity of Prophecies, harmony of writers, works of Providence, glory of Miracles, conſent of Nations, &c. Either then theſe arguments do ſolidly prove the Divine authority of the Scriptures, or they do not: if they do not, then *Bellarmine* is a Baffler to uſe fallacious arguments, and a Lyar too, having ſaid, *nothing is more evident, nothing more certain*: if they do, then the Scriptures may be evidenced to be the word of God without the Churches Teſtimony, which they ſo boldly deny at other times. The like might I ſhew out of *Gregory de Valentia*, who muſters up diverſe convincing arguments, whereby even Heathens may be ſatisfied, that the Scripture is the word of God, without the aid of the Churches authority (b). And the like is done by ſeveral of their learned and approved Authors: from which it plainly appears, That the foundation of Chriſtianity and Proteſtancy is one and the ſame, and that we have the ſame argu-

(a) *At ſacris Scripturis, quæ continentur in Propheticis & Apoſtolicis literis nihil eſt notius, nihil certius, ut ſtultiſſimum eſſe neceſſe ſit, qui illis fidem habendam eſſe neget. De verbo Dei lib.* 1. c. 2.

(b) *Analyſ. fidei lib.* 1. c. 3.

ments and evidences for the ground of our Faith, as Proteſtants, (viz. for the Divine authority of the Scriptures, independently upon the Churches teſtimony) which we have as Chriſtians; and that the Papiſts cannot ſay nor do any thing towards the ſubverſion of the Faith of the Reformed Churches herein, but at the ſame time, and by the ſame art and arguments, they muſt oppugne the Chriſtian cauſe, and acknowledg it untenable againſt a ſubtle Pagan or Atheiſt. And I deſire the Reader to conſider, that this is not an anſwer or argument *ad hominem*, which I now inſiſt upon, but fetched from the nature of the thing, & the verity of the Chriſtian Religion. And for what they pretend, That without the Churches Teſtimony we cannot know that S. Mathews Goſpel was written by him, and ſo the reſt: they ſhall take an Anſwer of a very eminent and approved Author of their own, *Melchior Canus: It is not much material to the Catholick Faith, that any book was written by this or that Author, ſo long as the Spirit of God is believed to be the Author of it: which Gregory learnedly delivers, and explaines; For it matters not with what pen the King writes his Letter, if it be true that he writ it* (a).

§ 3. The ſecond thing is, That the Books of Scripture are not corrupt in the eſſential and neceſſary points of Faith. This a man may eaſily diſcern by looking into the nature and quality of thoſe various lections, which are pleaded as evidences of corruption, where he ſhall quickly find them generally to be in matters of leſſe moment, and ſuch upon which Salvation doth not depend. But becauſe the examination of this would be a tedious work,

(a) *Deinde librum eſſe hujus aut illius Scriptoris non admodum intereſt Catholicæ fidei, dummodo Spiritus ſanctus author eſſe credatur. Quod Gregorius eruditè tradit & explicat: nec enim refert, quâ pennâ Rex Epiſtolam ſcripſerit, ſi verè ſcripſit. de locis Theolog: lib. 2. c. 11. p. 75.*

I ſhall ſave my ſelf and Reader the labour, and ſhall prove it in general (as at firſt I propoſed) from the confeſſion of the Papiſts themſelves, who condemn the raſhneſſe of thoſe of their own Brethren, (which out of a prepoſterous reſpect to the vulgar Tranſlation, aſſert the malitious corruption of the Hebrew Text,) and poſitively maintain the incorruption of the Bible in matters of importance. Of this opinion are, among the Papiſts, *Bellarmine, Arias Montanus, Driedo, Bannes, Tena, Acoſta, Lorinus,* and diverſe others: If you pleaſe, we will hear the fore-man of the Jury ſpeak for the reſt. *I confeſſe* (ſaith he) *that the Scriptures are not altogether pure, they have ſome errors in them; but they are not of ſuch moment, that the Scripture is defective in things that belong to faith and manners. For for the moſt part, thoſe differences and various lections conſiſt in ſome words which make little or no difference in the Text* (a). To whom I ſhall adde the acknowledgment of a late Author S. *Clara*, whoſe words are theſe: *Conſidering a moral thing morally, it is altogether impoſſible, that the Books of the New Teſtament were or are conſiderably adulterated* (b). And ſo he goes on, proving what he had aſſerted. This may ſuffice for the ſecond thing.

§ 4. For the third particular, (which alone now remains in doubt) concerning the ſenſe of Scripture. My aſ-

(a) *Scripturæ non ſunt omnino integræ, ac puræ, ſed habent ſuos quoſdam errores. Cæterùm non tanti momenti ſunt ejuſmodi errores, ut in iis, quæ ad fidem & mores pertinent, Scripturæ ſacræ integritas deſideretur. Plerumq; enim tota diſcrepantia variarum lectionum in dictionibus quibuſdam poſita eſt, quæ ſenſum aut parum aut nihil mutant. De verbo Dei lib. 2. c. 2. verſùs finem.*

(b) *Rem moralem, moraliter conſiderando, planè impoſſibile eſt libros præſertim Novi Teſtamenti fuiſſe vel eſſe notabiliter adulteratos. Syſtem. fidei c. 11. n. 8.*

ſertion is this: A Proteſtant hath or may have a ſufficient aſſurance of underſtanding the ſenſe of Scripture in things neceſſary to ſalvation. This I ſhall briefly prove by this argument: God's promiſe is ſufficient aſſurance, (the Papiſts do not pretend an higher aſſurance for their Churches Infallibility,) but a proteſtant is, or may be aſſured of this by God s promiſe, as appears from Joh. 7. 17. *If any man will do his will, he ſhall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.* Proteſtants have the aſſurance of Reaſon, and whatever the Papiſts talk, they have no other. It is true, they talk of ſeveral things, Fathers, Councels, Tradition, Motives of Credibility, &c. but in theſe, and all other arguments, both Papiſts and Proteſtants agree in this, that when they go to ſettle and ſatisfie their conſciences, though they hear many things, yet reaſon weighs them all, and rejects what it judgeth falſe, and holds faſt what it eſteemeth true and good: if that will not do, they have the aſſurance of the Spirit, which God hath promiſed to thoſe that ask it, Luk. 11.13. and this is as much as the Church her ſelf pretends. In a word, to ſtrike the buſineſſe dead, you ſhall ſee the perſpicuity and evidence of the Scriptures, in things neceſſary to ſalvation, acknowledged by our Adverſaries, from whom the force of Truth extorted theſe confeſſions: *That part of Scripture is plain and evident, which conteins the firſt and chief principles of things to be believed, and the principal rules of living:* ſo *Sixtus Senenſis* (a). *We deny not, that the chief articles of faith, which are neceſſary to ſalvation to all Chriſtians, are plainly enough comprehended in the writings of the Apoſtles:* ſo *Coſterus* (b). And *Salmeron*,

(a) *Illam Scripturæ partem apertam & dilucidam eſſe, quæ prima ſummaque rerum credendarum principia ac præcipua vivendi præcepta complectitur. Biblioth. ſanct. lib. 6. Annot.* 151.

(b) *Non inficiamur præcpua illa fidei Capita, quæ omnibus Chriſtianis cognita ſunt ad ſalutem neceſſaria, perſpicuè ſatis eſſe Apoſtolicis ſcriptis comprehenſa. in Enchirid. p.* 48.

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having ſaid, that all Doctrines and Traditions are to be examined by Scripture, he ſaith, *The Scripture is ſo framed and ordered by God, that it might be accommodated to all places, times, perſons, difficulties, dangers, diſeaſes, to drive away evil, to procure good, to overthrow errors, to ſtabliſh truths, to inſtil vertue, to expel vice* (a). And *Hieronymus ab Oleaſtro* ſaith, *We are to praiſe God for it, that thoſe things which are neceſſary to ſalvation, he hath made eaſy* (b). From all theſe things put together, I think I may ſay, it undeniably follows, (which I propoſed to evince,) That the foundation of a Proteſtants Faith is ſolid and ſufficient, our adverſaries themſelves being Judges.

§ 5. Onely I muſt remove one block out of the way. Peradventure they will ſay, that if all theſe things be true, concerning the word of God in its own language, yet there is one notorious defect in the groundwork of the Proteſtants Faith, viz. That they build it upon the credit of a Tranſlation, made by perſons confeſſedly fallible. This, becauſe they make ſuch a noiſe with it amongſt ignorant and injudicious perſons, (however to men of underſtanding it is but an impertinent diſcourſe) it will be convenient to ſay ſomething to it, and but a little. To this then I Anſwer 1. The Papiſts cannot in reaſon charge us with that fault, of which themſelves are equally guilty; nor can they accuſe our Faith of that infirmity, to which their own is no leſſe obnoxious: for the generality of unlearned Papiſts in the world have nothing but a Tranſlation, or, which is worſe, a meer Report, for the founda-

(a) *Scriptura ſic eſt à ſpiritu ſancto concinnata atque contexta, ut omnibus locis, temporibus, perſonis, difficultatibus, periculis, morbis, malis pellendis, bonis accerſendis, erroribus jugulandis, dogmatis ſtatuendis, virtutibus inſerendis, vitiis propulſandis ſit accommodata. Salmeron in Proleg.* 1.

(b) *Gratificandum Deo valdè, quòd, quæ ſunt neceſſaria ad ſalutem, facilia fecit, ſuper Deut.* 30.

tion of their Faith. If their suppositions were admitted, that the Pope or Councel is the infallible Judge of controversies, and that their Decrees are of undoubted verity, yet forasmuch as it is the lot of very few Papists to be eye or ear-witnesses of them, they are forced to receive the rules of their Faith, (i.e. the Decrees of Popes or Councels) either from the meer reports of such men, whom they acknowledge fallible, (unless they will (as indeed they may upon as good grounds, having once fallen into the humor of inventing) devise Infallible Nuntios, as well as an Infallible Judge) or at best, if they be transmitted to them in writing, yet since they are written in a strange language, and unknown to vulgar Papists, they cannot understand them but by a Translation. And consequently the case of vulgar Protestants, who rely upon a Translation of the decrees of holy Scripture, is not one jot inferior to that of vulgar Papists, who rely upon a Translation of the Popes decrees.

§ 6. *Ans.* 2. Those Protestants that understand not the original languages, have a sufficient foundation of their Faith in the Translations they enjoy, and that for two reasons. 1. They have so great a moral assurance of the verity of their Translation in all matters of moment, that no man can doubt of it, that is not within one remove of madnesse: and this is such a certainty, as the Papists have no reason to quarrel with. It is the observation of a grave Author of their own, *Those things are certain amongst men, which cannot be denied without perverseness and folly* (a). And again, *Such things as are delivered by common consent of histories, it is a most fooliſh*

(a) *Certa apud homines ea sunt, quæ negari sine pervicaciâ & stultitiâ non possunt.* Canus loc. com. lib. 11. de humanæ historiæ authoritate c. 4. p. 468.

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thing either to deny them, or doubt of them (a). Now to apply this. A man may have as great an humane aſſurance as is poſſible of the verity of our Tranſlations, by the collation of differing Tranſlations, made by ſeveral perſons in diverſe times and places, and they too in ſeveral languages, and ſometimes by men of oppoſite principles in Religion, yet all agreeing in the main; by the impoſſibility of a deſign among ſome learned men to cheat the vulgar by a falſe Tranſlation, there being ſo many watchful eyes upon them in every Tranſlation, ſo little benefit by ſuch a deceit, ſuch extreme danger and diſgrace attending upon it, ſuch improbability of any ſucceſſe: by the ridiculouſneſſe and impertinency of Popiſh exceptions againſt our Tranſlations, (as may be ſeen in the diſcourſes between Dr. *Fulk* and *Gregory Martin* upon that Subject) being in the groſſe ſo inconſiderable, that if all were granted they deſire, we need nothing elſe to confute them but their own *Doway* Bible, or *Rhemiſh* Teſtament: and ſeveral other wayes. In a word, the Papiſts themſelves have not ſo good ſecurity for that, upon which all their Religion and Infallibility depends, viz. whether *Alexander* the 7th. be a regular Pope: for, if he be not a Prieſt, which he is not, ſay the Papiſts, if his Ordainer did not intend to make him a Prieſt, (and who knows another mans intentions?) or if there was any Symony in his election to the Popedome, (which how is it poſſible for us to be aſſured that there was not?) in which caſe by their own profeſſion, the Election is null, and all the actions done by him afterward: ſo till they have better fortified their own Faith, I am ſure they haue no reaſon to quarrel with ours.

(a) *Plurima ſunt ejuſmodi, quæ communi hiſtoricorum conſenſione traduntur. Hæc non modo negare, ſed in his etiam addubitare, ſtultiſſimum eſt. ibid.*

§ 7.

§ 7. 2. There is more then a moral aſſurance, even a Divine Faith of the verity of that Scripture which is contained in our Tranſlations. For whereas, amongſt other arguments alledged by Chriſtians, and owned by the Papiſts themſelves, they urge the Majeſty of the Style, the ſublimity of the matter, the efficacy of the Doctrine, and its influence into the hearts of men, (of which *Gregory de Valentia* ſaith, *I know not whether it be a greater argument for the Scriptures then all the reſt, yea then miracles, confeſſion of adverſaries* &c.) (a). Now the power of theſe arguments is not confined to the original languages, but common to true Tranſlations: for it is not the ſhell of the words, but the kernell of the matter which commends it ſelf to the conſciences of men, and that is the ſame in all languages. The Scripture in Engliſh, no leſſe then in Hebrew or Greek, diſplayes its luſtre, and exerts its power, and diſcovers the characters of its Divine original. The moſt unlearned Chriſtians do ordinarily feel ſuch a ſupernatural force in the Scriptures, (though conveighed to them onely in a Tranſlation,) they find in themſelves, and obſerve in others ſuch a ſharpneſſe and energy, in oft times convincing the proudeſt ſinners, converting the moſt profligate wretches, comforting the moſt diſtreſſed conſciences, that it forceth them to ſay, *Non vox hominem ſonat*, God is in this Scripture of a truth. When a man finds the Law of God in Engliſh, *converting the ſoul, and enlightning the eyes*, (which was *David's* argument for its Divinity, Pſal. 19.) when men feel the Scripture in the Engliſh Tranſlation *quick and powerful, and ſharper then any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and the joints and marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*: (which was S. *Paul's* argument Heb. 12.)

(a) *Anal. fidei lib.* 1. *c.* 20.

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and ſo I might inſtance in diverſe others properties: what can they infer, but that it is the voice of God, though he ſpeaks by an Interpreter, that it is the water of life, though conveighed to them in the Glaſſe of a Tranſlation.

§ 8. *Anſ.* 3. At worſt, this may fully ſtop their mouths, that the argument doth not touch the merits of the cauſe, nor ſhake the foundation of our Faith, but onely concerns ſome particular perſons, viz. ſuch as are ignorant of, and unlearned in the original languages. So the defect lies in the perſons, not in the cauſe, not in the ground-work of our Faith, but in the neglects of ſome men, to build up themſelves fully upon it. If any man be unſatisfied with Tranſlations, he hath under God a remedy in his own hands: if he like not the Ciſtern, he may go to the Fountaine, if he will take the pains of ſo long a journey. A little induſtry, and diligent uſe of thoſe means and helps which are offered even to vulgar Chriſtians, will wholly remove this difficulty, and put a period to this argument.

§ 9. I ſhall conclude this diſcourſe with the conſideration of two particulars. The firſt is an objection they urge againſt the ſolidity of our Faith. The ſecond, is one plea more they have for the ſolidity of their own. The firſt is an objection, which they frequently urge in all their Treatiſes: That circular way of argumentation, which we juſtly object againſt them, they boldly retort upon us, and tell us, that we have no way to prove the Scripture, but by the Spirits teſtimony, and no way to prove the Spirits teſtimony, but by the Scripture. This is counted one of the hardeſt knots, and therefore it will be worth the while in few words to unty it, (though it may ſeem a little heterogeneous to my preſent deſign.)

§ 10. 1 They have no reaſon to object this circle to us, that they cannot free themſelves from. I ſpeak not now of the other famous circle of the Church and Scripture,

ture, (which their moſt learned Authors of late have ingenuouſly confeſſed,) but here is another Circle: The Papiſts have *Circulum in Circulo.* For they profeſſe a man cannot know the Church, but by the Spirit, nor the Spirit but by the Church. That a man cannot know the Spirit, nor the mind of the Spirit, nor diſtinguiſh it from falſe and counterfeit ones, but by the Church, is their great principle: He cannot know it (ſay they) by the Scripture, unleſſe he read it with the Churches ſpectacles; Revelation they do not pretend to, therefore this is known onely by the Church, (to whom the diſcerning of Spirits belongs,) and by others onely from the Churches authority, and infallible teſtimony. But that is a clear caſe: the onely doubt lies about the other branch, viz. That a man (according to their principles) cannot know the Church but by the Spirit: and that you ſhall have under the hands of their great Maſters. *Stapleton's* words are theſe: *This ſecret teſtimony is altogether neceſſary, that a man may believe the Churches judgment and teſtimony about the approbation of the Scriptures, neither will Faith follow without this inward teſtimony of the Spirit of God, although the Church atteſt, commend, publiſh, approve the Scripture a thouſand times over* (a). So *Canus* tels us, that *Humane authority, and other motives, are not ſufficient inducements to believe, but there is moreover a neceſſity of an inward efficient cauſe, i.e. the ſpecial help of God moving us to believe* (b). What can be more plain? let them an-

(a) *Arcanum hoc teſtimonium neceſſarium prorſus eſt, ut quis Eccleſiæ teſtimonio ac judicio circa Scripturarum approbationem credat, neq; abſque hoc interno Divini Spiritus teſtimonio, etiamſi millies Eccleſia atteſtetur, commendet, promulget, approbet Scripturas, fides conſequetur. Defenſ. contra Whitak. lib. 1. c. 1.*

(b) *Statuendum eſt authoritatem humanam & incitamenta omnia illa prædicta, ſive alia quæcunque adhibita ab eo qui proponit fidem, non eſſe ſufficientes cauſas ad credendum, ut credere tenemur; ſed præterea opus eſt interiori cauſa efficiente, i. e. Dei ſpeciali auxilio moveatis ad credendum. Loc. Theol. lib. 2. cap. 8.*

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ſwer themſelves, and that will ſerve our turn. Either they muſt leave themſelves in the Circle, or help us out. *Jam ſumus ergo pares.* And it is unreaſonable, that they ſhould urge that as a peculiar inconvenience of our Reſolution of Faith, to which their own is no leſſe obnoxious.

§ 11. 2. It is falſe, that we have no other way to prove the Scripture to be the word of God, but the Spirits internal Teſtimony. They cannot be ignorant, that we have diverſe arguments of another nature, and independent upon that Teſtimony of the Spirit, by which the authority of Scripture is ſolidly proved. And Papiſts as well as Proteſtants have ſubſtantially defended the cauſe of the Scriptures againſt Pagans and Atheiſts. Either thoſe arguments are ſolid, rational, and convincing, or they are not: if they ſay, they are not; then, Be it known to all men by theſe preſents, that the Aſſertors of Popery are the Betrayers of Chriſtianity: If they be, then is the Scripture proved other wayes, then by the Spirits teſtimony. How can our Adverſaries vindicate themſelves, either from ſhameful Ignorance, if they do not know; or abominable malice, if they wittingly bely us, that we have no argument to prove the Scripture, but the Teſtimony of the Spirit. What, are thoſe glorious miracles, by which the Scripture was ſealed and propagated, now become no argument? Is the Tranſcendency of the Matter, and Majeſty of the Style, and admirable Power of the Word of none effect, to prove the Scriptures Divinity? Are not the patience of Martyrs, the concurring teſtimony of Jewes and Heathens to the truth of Scripture-relations, the verity of predictions, and the like, as ſolid arguments now, as they were in the Primitive times, when the Fathers confounded the learnedeſt Pagans by theſe and ſuch like arguments? If they be, (as they muſt affirm, unleſſe they will turn perfect Pagans, as they are in the half way to it already,) then their Aſſertion is falſe, That

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we cannot prove the Divinity of the Scripture, but by the Spirits Teſtimony; and the Circle, which they impute to us, is indeed in their own Brain, and their Argument is the fruit of their Vertigo.

§ 12. 3. Here is no Circle, becauſe, although the Spirit and Scripture do mutually prove one another, yet they do it *in diverſo genere*, in diverſe wayes, and ſeveral capacities: but a Circle is, when a man proceeds *ab eodem ad idem eodem modo cognitum*, when a mans knowledg proceeds from the ſame thing to the ſame thing in the ſame way. But in this caſe, though the thing be the ſame, yet the way of knowledg varies, and that breaks the Circle. The Scripture proves the Spirit, *per modum objecti & argumenti*, objectively, and by way of argument, by ſuggeſting ſuch truths to me, from which I may collect the κοινήεια of the Spirit, and prove its Divinity. But the Spirit proves, or rather approves the Scripture, *per modum cauſæ effectivæ & inſtrumenti*, as a Divine inſtrument infuſed into the ſoul, whereby I am enabled to apprehend ſuch verities as are contained in the Scripture. The Papiſts indeed cannot get out of their Circle of Church and Scripture, becauſe each of them is the argument by which they prove the other: the argument, nay the onely argument (ſay they) for which I believe the Scripture, is the authority of the Church, teſtifying it: and the argument, for which they believe the Church, is the authority of the Scripture. And here the Circle is ſo groſſe and evident, that it is acknowledged by diverſe of their own late learned Authors. *Holden* confeſſeth in expreſſe terms, that they who reſolve their Faith in this manner, (and ſo do almoſt all the learned Papiſts in the world) *do unavoidably fall into a Circle* (a). So the late Anſwe-

(a) *In Circulum hunc inevitabiliter illabuntur, & in orbem turpiſſimè ſaltantes &c. Holden de reſolut. fidei lib. 1. c. 9.*

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rer of Biſhop *Lawd* confeſſeth, *it is a vitious Circle to prove Scripture from the Churches Tradition, and the Churches Tradition from Scripture* (a), (as they generally do, ſome few Excentrical ſpirits excepted:) nor can he get out of it, but by returning to that Vomit, which his former Maſters had diſcharged themſelves from, viz. to prove Infallibility by miracles, and the motives of credibility. But in our caſe it is qnite otherwiſe, for the Spirit works *ut inſtrumentum*, by way of Inſtrument; the Scripture, *ut argumentum*, by way of Argument. It were an abſurd aſperſion to call this a Circle, if any man ſhould ſay: I believe the Sun to be bigger then the Earth, becauſe my reaſon tels me it is ſo, and I believe my reaſon ſaith true, becauſe Mathematical arguments convince me it muſt needs be ſo. That which frees this diſcourſe from the Circle, is, that the Mathematicks prove it, *ut argumentum*, Reaſon proves it *ut inſtrumentum*: and the ſame may be ſaid in the preſent caſe. I ſhall farther illuſtrate this by a ſimilitude or two: It is here, as when a man, through the infirmity of his eye, apprehends a thing to be leſſe then it is. There are three wayes, whereby this man may be convinced of his error: 1. By arguments taken from the thing it ſelf. 2. By bringing the object nearer to the eye, (which was at too great a diſtance) whereby it appears in its due proportion. 3. By curing the infirmity of the eye. Thus the Phyſitian, that removes the diſtemper of the eye, and reſtores it to its native ſtrength and vigor, may be ſaid to convince him. Now to apply this. The Spirit of God doth not convince a man of the Divinity of the Scriptures the firſt way, as a Philoſopher, but the laſt way, as a Phyſitian; not by an elucidation of the object by arguments, but by the eleva-

(a) *Lawd's Labyrinth. ch.* 5.

tion

tion of the faculty, or by anointing the eyes with eye-ſalve, and curing its infirmity. To which the ſecond may be added, viz That the Spirit of God brings his word, and the characters of its Divinity impreſſ'd upon it, nearer unto us, and writes it in the heart according to Gods promiſe to that purpoſe, and ſo we ſee the object better, by reaſon of its approximation to us. Or as it is with a Philoſopher, when he reads a book, written in the defence of ſome Poſition, (as ſuppoſe the doctrine of the circulation of the Bloud,) poſſibly his mind may be diſcompoſed, and his braines by reaſon of ſome peccant humor much diſtemper'd, and in this caſe he reads the book, but is not at all ſatisfied by it: afterwards, Phyſical means are applyed, whereby the brain is reſtored to its native conſtitution, and purged from thoſe diſtempers, whereby it was clouded: now he returns to the book again, and reads it over anew, and yields himſelve captive to the opinion. You ſee here is no change of the old arguments, nor any addition of new ones; onely the impediments which were in the faculty, or the organ, are removed. Juſt ſo it is in the matter now in controverſy: The Spirit of God doth not prove the Scripture to me by arguments, which I never had before, but by the illumination of my mind, to apprehend the arguments, which I did not apprehend before. It is with men, as it was with *Hagar*, Gen. 21. there was a Well of water, but ſhe ſaw it not, till God open'd her eyes, verſ. 19. There is a ſelf-evidencing light in the Scriptures, onely the Spirit of God cures that blindneſs of mind, whereby the Devil hindred the world from diſcerning it. Thus the Spirit convinced the Jews of the Truth of the Goſpel by removing the vaile, which was upon their hearts in the reading of *Moſes*, 2 Cor. 3. 15, 16. And ſo God convinced his elect among the Heathens, not by diſcovering any more arguments to them, then he did to the reprobates among them,

them, for the ſame doctrine and arguments were preached to both alike, but by opening their eyes to ſee what others ſaw not, Act. 26. 18. and by opening their hearts to receive what others would not receive, as Act. 16. 14. To conclude, foraſmuch as the teſtimony of the Spirit is not the Argument for which, but onely the Inſtrument by which they believe; and on the contrary, the Teſtimony of Scripture is the proper argument for which they believe, it is moſt evident, that they work in ſeveral capacities, and ſo we are fully diſcharged from that Circle, which they cauſleſly charge us with, and notwithſtanding this objection, the foundation of our Faith ſtandeth ſure. This is the firſt particular.

§ 13. The other particular concernes the Popiſh foundation: for ſome of the Romaniſts finding themſelves ſo wofully intangled in the buſineſs of Infallibillity, are grown ſick of the notion. *Creſſy*, the Engliſh Apoſtate, in his *Exomologeſis* confeſſeth, That *Infallibility is an unfortunate word, combated by Mr. Chillingworth with too too great ſucceſs, that he could wiſh the word were forgotten, or at leaſt laid by*: theſe therefore tell us, that if the Infallibility of the Church be denied, yet a Papiſt hath ſufficient ground for his Faith in the Churches authority, in which he is obliged to acquieſce, and whom he muſt hear in all things: and this way ſome others go. This I thought fit to mention, that the world may ſee the complexion of a Romiſh conſcience, and the deſperate ſhifts which the wretchedneſſe of their cauſe forceth them to. But becauſe the abſurdity of this new fancy doth *ſuâ luce conſtare*, I ſhall diſmiſs it with two remarks upon it.

1. That it is diſclaimed by the Romiſh Church, (and it were a frivolous thing to concern our ſelves in refuting all the wild fancies of their particular Doctors.) It is true *Creſſy* ſaith, *No ſuch word as Infallibility is to be found in*

ony Councel: the good man had forgot the definition of the Councel of *Basil*, wherein they call it a *pernitious error, to say, that a Councel can erre:* (the passage I cited before,) or else he meant to be witty; for it is very true, that *non potest errare* is not the same word with *Infallibility*, though it be the same thing. Nor do the Papists onely assert the Infallibility of their Church, but generally acknowledge, That without this, their Faith would have no solid Foundation, nor their Religion any certainty. I shall not multiply instances in so known a thing: you have many instances in one, in that forementioned passage of the Councel of *Basil*, That *if once that pernitious error were admitted, that general Councels may erre, the whole Catholick Faith would totter* (a). And *Bellarmine* in a forequoted passage confesseth, That *it is a most unreasonable thing to require Christians to be finally subject to the judgment of that Church which is liable to error* (b). And therefore I need not cast away pretious time in confuting those particular fancies of some private Doctors, which are directly repugnant unto the confessed opinion of the Pope, and the Decree of a general Councel.

2. This is so far from mending the matter, that it makes it far worse: for he that saith, *I am bound to believe the Church in all things, because she is infallible in all things*, speaks that which is coherent in it self, and the consequence is agreeable to reason; the onely fault lies in the Antecedent. But he that saith, I am bound to believe the Church in all things, though she may erre in many things, (and none knows how many,) throws himself and me upon such desperate Rocks, as none but a mad-man would run upon. When *Bellarmine* delivers that desperate doctrine, That *if the Pope should command us to sin, we are*

(a) *In Responsione Synodali.*
(b) *lib. 2. de Concil. motor. c. 3.*

bound

bound to obey him: and when others have ſaid, That *if the Pope ſhould lead thouſands to Hell, we muſt not reprove him*: their followers mollifie the harſhneſſe of thoſe aſſertions with this favourable conſtruction, That the Propoſitions are onely Hypothetical, depending upon ſuch conditions, as by reaſon of the promiſe of Infallibility, can never be fulfilled, for (ſay they) the Pope cannot command ſin, and cannot lead men to Hell: and this, if true were a plauſible evaſion. But to tell me, that, if the Pope or Church may erre, yet I am bound to believe & obey them in all things, this is to make that my Duty, which God hath threatned as a terrible Curſe, 2 Theſ. 2. viz. to believe lies: This is to confront the Apoſtle, Act. 5. and to ſay, That *it is better to obey men then God*, when their commands are contrary; this is to bring me under a neceſſity of that Woe, denounced againſt ſuch as *call evill good, and good evill, that put darkneſſe for light, and light for darkneſſe*, Iſa. 5. 20. This is to ſay, That I am bound to follow my blind Leaders, though it be into the Ditch; That I am under an obligation of offending God by making him a lyar, and of damning my own Soul. This is to ſay, That the Iſraelites were bound to obey *Aaron*'s Idolatrous decree, concerning the obſervation of the Feaſt of the Calfe: nay more, That the Jewes were bound to obey their Church in putting Chriſt to death, though they had at that time known him to be the true Meſſias. In a word, ſuch and ſo many are the prodigious abſurdities which would inevitably follow from that wild aſſertion, that Madneſſe it ſelf, unleſſe in its higheſt Paroxyſme, could not equal it: and when the Authors of it come to themſelves, or return to the judgment of their own Church, or when their Church comes over to their opinion, and layes aſide their bold preſences to Infallibility, they may expect a farther Anſwer.

But ſince I wrot this, I find, Mr. *Creſſy* hath ſaved me the labour of farther Anſwer: for in his ſecond edition,

(and *ſecundæ cogitationes ſunt meliores*) I find him ſick of his former notion: I ſuppoſe he hath met with ſharp rebukes from his wiſer Brethren, what Penances or cenſures they have inflicted on him I know not, but the effect is viſible, and the man is brought to a recanting ſtrain. And that he may have ſome colourable Palliation for it, he pretends, he was miſ-underſtood, and that he never meant to deny Infallibility to the Church, ſave onely in the moſt rigorous ſenſe that the Terme could import, and therefore he roundly aſſerts, *That the Church can neither deceive believers that follow her, nor be deceived her ſelf.* Exomolog. ſect. 2. ch. 21. And, *Infallibility and Authority are in effect all one as applied to the Church: for to ſay, that the Church hath authority to oblige all Chriſtians to receive her Doctrines, and withall to ſay ſhe is fallible, is extremity of Injuſtice and Tyranny.* Appendix to Exomolog. chap. 5. num. 14. So this pretence is alſo gone after the reſt: and therefore from all that hath been diſcourſed and proved, I may take the boldneſſe to conclude, That the Faith of a Papiſt, if he keep to his own principles, hath no Foundation, or is not built upon the Rock, but meerly upon the Sand, or (in the Prophet's language) *they have forſaken* (the Scriptures,) *the fountain of living water, to hew out unto themſelves broken Ciſterns, that can hold no water.*

An APPENDIX *by way of reflection upon Captain* Robert Everards EPISTLE, *and account of his Converſion and Submiſſion to the* Romiſh Church; *and* Mr Creſly's EXOMOLOGESIS.

SInce the finiſhing of the foregoing Treatiſe, I was told of an Epiſtolary Diſcourſe of Captaine *Everards*, and withall that the ſubſtance of it was fully Anſwered by what I had there diſcuſſed, onely it was convenient to accommodate the paſſages relating thereto to the ſeverall parts of his Epiſtle: Upon this ſugeſtion I procured the Epiſtle it ſelfe as enlarged in the ſecond Edition, and diligently read it once or twice over: And I confeſſe I was at firſt dubious whether I ſhould take any notice of it, partly becauſe I ſaw it was nothing but a collection out of others (as he moſt properly calls it) and a repetition of thoſe old Sophiſmes, that have been anſwered and exploded an hundred times over, and partly becauſe I diſcerned by the ſpirit of the man, and the frame of his Diſcourſe, and the circumſtances of his change, that there was no likelihood at all of retriving and reclaiming him, how cleare and irreſiſtible ſoever the evidence and arguments were that ſhould be produced. He that hath but half an Eye may ſee a deſigne in the whole management of the change: And although he aſſures us with a *teſte me ipſo*, that he is not biaſſed by worldly intereſts, and private ends, he muſt allow diſcreet perſons the liberty of their

Faith in that particular, and not take it amiſſe, if ſeeing the feebleneſſe of his Arguments, and their inſufficiency for the producing of ſuch a change, they ſuſpect it was done by the power of intereſt, which is ſo ſecret an affaire, and its methods ſo cryptical, and the waies of ſerving it ſo various, that no wiſe man will believe it impoſſible, and I am ſure the contexture of his Diſcourſe, and the manner of his proceſſe doth not render it at all incredible: And theſe conſiderations inclined me to ſilence: But on the other ſide when I conſidered, that the hand of *Joab* ſufficiently appeares in the penning of this Epiſtle, that it was a collection of the ſtrength of more Learned Writers, and a conjunction of abler heads then his own, who were reſolved in this occaſion and inſtance, to repreſent what could in brieſe be ſaid to perſwade unſetled perſons to change their Religion; and (whatever other mens opinions are) what a reverend eſteem the Author hath of it, who tels us he ſaw reaſon enough to believe it could not be Anſwered *pag.* 88. and that he challengeth it as a piece of juſtice to ſhew him his errors; I thought it not amiſſe to take ſome notice of it, knowing that if what I ſhould ſay were unſucceſſefull to him, yet it would not be unacceptable to God, (ſince we are a ſweet ſavour of God in them that believe and in them that periſh) and that if I were not an inſtrument of Gods mercy to him, in reducing him to the truth from which he hath revolted, yet I ſhould be an inſtrument of Gods Juſtice, and a witneſſe on Gods behalfe to leave him without excuſe.

In one thing I muſt crave Mr *Everards* pardon, if I do not take his Counſell in Anſwering him κατὰ πόδας and ſetting down each of his Paragraphs before the ſeverall Anſwers: It is a courſe which I confeſſe I do not approve of in the anſwering of other Authors, becauſe it runs a man into perſonall conteſts, and petite animadverſions,

verſions, and catching at little advantages, and ſo expends the anſwerers paines, and the readers patience, and the buyers mony to no purpoſe, and if I did like it in ſome others, yet really he muſt excuſe me if I do not eſteem him ſo claſſicall an Author, nor his Epiſtle ſo weighty a Diſcourſe, as to deſerve ſuch ſolemne conſideration: Yet this I ſhall promiſe him (and I call God to witneſſe it) that I ſhall not wilfully decline any part of it, wherein his ſtrength may lie, but ſhall indeavour to the utmoſt of my poor skill, to ſingle out ſuch things as are moſt plauſible and conſiderable, and ſuch, as if they be ſolidly Anſwered, the reſt will fall of courſe, or need no further trouble.

What I have to ſay, I ſhall reduce to two heads. 1. Perſonall. 2. Dogmaticall. The firſt I ſhall paſſe over in few words, becauſe it concernes not the merits of the cauſe, and yet it is not convenient wholly to neglect it, becauſe it is ſet forth μετὰ πολλῆς παῤῥησίας, and Mr *Everard* (whom I would by no meanes deprive of his due praiſe) hath ſhewed wit and art in it, ſomething therefore muſt be ſaid to diſabuſe ſuch as are too apt to be deceived with good words and faire ſpeeches, and the influence of examples: And if there be ſome ſeeming harſhneſſe in my expreſſions, it muſt not be aſcribed to my temper (which my friends will aſſoyle me from) or principles, or hatred of Mr *Everard*, (a perſon known to me *nec beneficio, nec injuriâ*) but to the diſcharge of my duty (which is to rebuke ſuch as he is σφοδρῶς ſharply) and the neceſſary caution of others; My perſonall reflections ſhall onely be two, The firſt upon the quality of the perſon; The ſecond, The occaſion and manner of the change.

1. As for the quality of the perſon, I muſt confeſſe I am not at all ſurprized with the Apoſtacy (for ſo I muſt call it with St *Paul*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. and 2 *Theſ.* 2. 3.) of a perſon

ſon of his character, as we have it drawn by his own pen, *pag.4. When I profeſt my ſelfe againſt Infant-Baptiſme, I had run through almoſt (if not altogether) all the ſeverall Profeſſions of Chriſtianity then appearing in this Kingdome.* It is no new thing that a giddy headed man ſhould get a fall: It is no more then was long ſince foretold, and this day in this perſon thoſe Scriptures are fulfilled which tell us, that the *unlearned and unſtable* ſhould *wreſt the Scripture* (as this Epiſtler moſt horribly doth) *to their own deſtruction*, 2 *Pet.* 3,16. That ſuch *as received not the Truth in the love of it, ſhould be given up to ſtrong deluſions to believe lies*, 2 Theſ. 2. 10,11. that ſuch as were *ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth* ſhould be *led away*, 2 Tim. 3.6,7. that *evill men and ſeducers* (as he now acknowledgeth he was) ſhould *wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and being deceived*, verſ.13. that unſtable ſoules ſhould be beguiled, 2 *Pet.*2.14.

It is not at all ſtrange, that he that deſpiſed the perſons, vilified the function, contemned and forſook the guidance of able and faithfull Proteſtant Miniſters, by whom he might have been eaſily antidoted againſt this Infection, ſhould be betrayed into the hands of Romiſh Prieſts: It is not ſtrange that he that loved to wander ſhould *antiquum obtinere*, and having paſſed thorough all the varieties which *England* affords, ſhould gratify his temper and follow his inclinations to ſee what newes at Rome: In the meane time it concernes all Proteſtants, and eſpecially perſons of the ſame complexion and condition, with fear and reverence to behold the juſt and tremendous judgment of God upon unſetled and unſtable Chriſtians, and ſuch as are given to change, whileſt they ſee theſe ſmaller rivulets of leſſer errors leading to the dead Sea of damnable deluſions: And as we have many wofull inſtances of poore deluded Soules, that having wandred from party to party, from opinion to opinion,

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from congregation to congregation, have at laſt been ſwallowed up, ſome in the gulfe of downright Atheiſme, others of the beſotting dotages of the Quakers; ſo we have here an inſtance of one, whom the ſame wildneſſe and wantonneſſe of opinion hath betrayed to Popiſh impoſtures.

The ſecond perſonall reflection concernes the occaſion and manner of his change which in briefe is this, as himſelfe repreſents it *pag.* 5,6,*&c.* He falls into the company and acquaintance of a Lay-Papiſt (which he had been allwaies told and ſo ſuppoſed that they were an ignorant Generation) and he propoſeth and preſſeth an Argument, which the Captaine could not Anſwer, and therefore ſubmits and borrowes two or three Popiſh Books from that Gentleman (*viz.* the queſtion of queſtions, *Fiat Lux*, and *Knots* anſwer to *Chillingworth*) and ſo the work is done, my Captaine is conquer'd, and become a Papiſt, or (*ſtilo novo*) a Roman Catholick: Upon this relation I ſhall take the boldneſſe to make theſe following Animadverſions.

1. In generall, It is very obſervable how eaſily he gives up the cauſe, how valiantly the Captaine fought in the field I know not, but ſure I am, if he fought at the ſame rate that here he diſputes, no man could deſire an eaſier adverſary: Happily becauſe he was about to commence into a beliefe of the unbloody Sacrifice of the Maſſe, he was reſolved his Antagoniſt ſhould not have a bloody victory: I ſhall adventure to commend this patterne as an effectuall receit to make Papiſts, and (that you may ſee it is a πολυχρηστον if not a παυφάρμακον) it will indifferently ſerve to make Turks, Jewes, Pagans, or Hereticks of any kind: Let a perſon unlearned or unſtudied in the point he debates (ſuch as none that read this relation will deny this Author to have been unleſſe they be ſuch themſelves) enter the liſts with ſome able Champion

Champion of the adverſe party (a Character which the Captaine himſelfe aſcribes to his then Antagoniſt) and when he meets with an objection that himſelfe cannot Anſwer, let him conclude it unanſwerable (which our Author did) and read two or three ſuch Books as his Adverſary ſhall put into his hand, if this do not ſpeedily and effectually worke the cure, he may be given over for deſperate.

2. Though to determine that this ſuppoſed converſion was a plotted buſineſſe, may ſeem an intruſion into the Divine prerogative to judge the heart, yet this I may ſafely ſay, that it looks ſo like a plot, that it requires more then an ordinary charity to believe it was not: For as the Philoſopher well obſerves, no man muſt (and no ſerious man will) forſake a ſolid and well grounded Truth, for ſome ſubtill objection ſuggeſted by a crafty diſputer, which he cannot anſwer; If it was not a deſigned thing, how can it be imagined, that in a matter of Salvation and damnation, he ſhould be ſo groſſely negligent in the uſe of means to come to the knowledge of the Truth and the anſwering of his Objection? Otherwiſe who can believe that he would not have addreſſed himſelf to ſome able Proteſtant Miniſter or Scholar to ſee whether he could Anſwer it, (unleſſe peradventure, through the pride of his heart he ſcorned the advice of Miniſters, and thought himſelfe wiſer then his Teachers, and then no wonder ſuch pride had a fall) or would he not by the direction of ſome knowing Proteſtant have rather ſearched into ſome Proteſtant Books for an Anſwer, (as here he falls upon the reading of Popiſh Authors by the advice of a Papiſt) if he really were a Proteſtant at that time when he pretended to be ſo? for if this Captaine had underſtood thoſe controverſies, and ſpent that time in the reading of the ſolid Books of excellent Proteſtant Authors, and grounding himſelfe in the Principles of Religion,

gion, which he ſpent in talking and teaching others, and ſcribling of idle Pamphlets, and railing at Learned and Godly Miniſters; theſe objections which through his ignorance and unacquaintedneſſe with thoſe points ſeemed new to him, would have been diſcovered to him as they are to others, to be but *colewortſ* not twice but twenty times ſod; and Arguments long ſince exploded.

3. To this let me adde, the wonder is the greater, and the deſigne more credible, to conſider that his converſion ſhould be wrought by ſuch Authors: as *Fiat Lux*, and *Knots* Anſwer to *Chillingworth*: The former, nothing but an heap of words and an empty ſound, which if ſtript of all its gauderies, and rhetoricall flaſhes, (apt to take none but children in underſtanding) and all the weight of reaſons were pickt out and brought together, it might (without ſuch Art as was ſhewed about *Homer*) be put into a Nut-ſhell; unleſſe happily that was the Argument that convinced him, that the Author tels us (us I ſay who are Engliſh-men and remember the *Marian* Perſecution, and the *Iriſh* Maſſacre, and the bloodineſſe of the *French* Leaguers, and the barbarities of High and Low *Germany*, and the late Ferities of *Piemont*) that the Pope is a very honeſt Gentleman that never did any harme.

And for *Knots* infidelity unmasked, that man that ſhall take that Book for a ſolid confutation of Mr *Chillingworth*, muſt have loſt both reaſon and conſcience; (for the loſſe of one of them will hardly ſerve turne) by which you may ſee the Captaine was prepared for a change, and like ſoft-Wax ready to receive the impreſſion. And this is all I ſhall ſay concerning the quality of the perſon, and the manner of his change; I ſhall now come to the Dogmaticall part.

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The firſt and principall thing will be to conſider the force of that Diſcourſe which did the work, which though it be a very ſilly one, yet is commenſurate to many mens capacities, and meeting with an ignorant proud or looſe Proteſtant, ſometimes is the meane of their perverſion.

The Popiſh Gentleman *asked me* (ſaith my Author) *whether I was ſo certainly and infallibly aſſured of the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion, that it was not poſſible for me, or for thoſe who taught me Chriſtianity to be miſtaken therein; and he gave me this reaſon for his queſtion, that otherwiſe, as to me, Chriſtianity could be no more then probably true, and we could not condemne the Jew, or Turke, or Pagan, ſince they were as well perſwaded of their ſeverall wayes, as we could be of ours, upon a fallible certainty, and for ought we knew, (not having any infallible certainty for our Chriſtianity) ſome of them might be in the right, and wee in the wrong way, for it is poſſible you may be miſtaken*, pag 5, 6.

This is that, that did the deed, and this is the ſhield of *Hercules*, or rather the ſword of *Goliah*, by which they ſometimes do execution upon an ungrounded or ungodly Proteſtant, which therefore it will be worth while a little to inſiſt upon.

1. Let it be obſerved, what rare Champions the Papiſts are for the Chriſtian cauſe, and what a ſingular courſe they take for the Converſion of Jewes and Turks and Pagans: For more clearneſſe I ſhall repreſent it in a Syllogiſticall forme: If the Church of Rome (*i.e.* the Pope and a Councell) be not infallible, a Jew, or Turke, or Pagan are as well perſwaded of their ſeverall waies, as we of ours, theſe are the Authors words: But the Church of Rome (whether you mean the Pope or Councel or both) is not infallible. This I hope hath been made evident enough from the foregoing diſcourſe, *Ergo*, a

Jew

Jew, or Turk, or Pagan are as well perſwaded of their ſeveral wayes, as we of ours: a glorious Concluſion! and moſt true of Italian Chriſtians: Turks and Pagans are as well perſwaded of their wayes, as they are of Chriſtianity. Nor is it without cauſe that ſo many Authors (ſome of them Popiſh) complain ſo much of the ſwarms of Atheiſts in the Church of *Rome*; for certainly this is as compendious a way to Atheiſme as can lightly be imagined; to hang the verity of Chriſtianity and the Pope's or Councels Infallibility upon the ſame pin; and conſequently thoſe learned Papiſts, who doubtleſs many of them laugh in their ſleeves, to ſee ſo credulous and ſimple a world to believe the latter, can eaſily ſhake off the ſence of the former.

2 Let us examine a little the ſtrength of this pretty Propoſition: That if we be not infallibly aſſured of the truth of Chriſtianity, Jewes, and Turks, and Pagans are as well perſwaded of their wayes, as we of ours. What a mad aſſertion is this, that nothing is credible, but what is infallibly certain, and that there is no difference between probabilities and improbabilities, and yet ſuch Whirlpools and quick-ſands muſt they needs ſink into, that give up themſelves to the conduct of Popiſh guides and principles. I am not infallibly certain, that there is ſuch a place as *Jamaica*, (for it is poſſible all Geographers may miſtake, and all Travellers may lye, unleſſe his Holineſſe ſhould chance to make a voyage to ſee:) therefore by this doughty argument, I am as certain, that there is a Sea-paſſage to *China* by the North. I am not infallibly ſure, that the Sun is bigger then a Buſhel, (for *Epicurus* thought it no bigger, as *Cicero* informes us:) Therefore (it ſeems) I am as certain that there is a World in the Moon, or in every Star (as ſome Philoſophers held.) I am not infallibly certain of the exiſtence and atchievements of *Alexander* the Great;

Great; by this argument it will follow, that I am no leſſe ſure of the hiſtory and adventures of St. *George* of England. What if I be not infallibly ſure of the truth of the Chriſtian Religion, may there not be ſuch clear probabilities, and cogent evidence, that none but a mad man can deny it? What if in a froſty morning I ſhould find 2 or 3 verſes written upon a glaſſe window, will any man in his right wits doubt, that ſome man or other writ them? and yet it is not impoſſible (becauſe it implies no contradiction) that the Froſt (which oft times carves out various and curious figures) ſhould ſome time or other have a lucky hit, and fall into a vein of Poetry. Or what if I ſee a Calf in a field, will any ſober man queſtion whether it came from a Cow, becauſe I am not infallibly certain it did not drop out of the Clouds, as once one did? In like manner, if I be not ſimply infallible (taking the word in a ſtrict and proper notion) of the Truth of Chriſtian Religion, yet certainly it may ſuffice againſt any Turk, or Jew, or Pagan, or Papiſt either, who in this argument, as in many other things, are confederate with them, whoſe Reaſon makes him a perſon fit for Diſcourſe, that there are ſo great and many and pregnant evidences, that no man can deny without forfeiture of his reaſon, diſcretion, and modeſty, and all the principles of humanity.

3 If this argument be cogent, and beſides the *certitudo objecti*, the infallibility of the thing, there be required a *certitudo ſubjecti*, the infallibility of the Perſon, to be ſatisfied, (which here is contended for;) then not onely the Pope and Councel, but every particular Chriſtian muſt have this gift of Infallibility, (an ampliation of the priviledge which his great Ghoſtly Father will never allow,) for mark it, that is the thing which the Catholick Gentleman urged, and wherewith my Captain was gravelled: *He asked me* (ſaith he) *whether I was ſure and certain*

tain,—and whether I was ſo certainly and infallibly aſſured of the truth of Chriſtian Religion, or elſe (ſaid he) *as to me Chriſtianity was but probably true, elſe it is poſſible you may be miſtaken*: and at this rate do they uſe to talke to ſuch as they deſire to Proſelyte. By all which it appears, that the infallibility muſt be particular in every individual perſon, that would be ſatisfied himſelf, or would convince another of the Truth of Chriſtianity. I am not ignorant of a ſhuffling artifice, which this Catholick uſed in confounding two things together, neceſſary to be diſtinguiſhed, as no wonder to meet with confuſion of language in the builders of *Babel*, whilſt he (too cunning for twenty of theſe Novices) ſtates the buſineſſe thus: *He asked me* (ſaith my Author) *whether I was ſo certain, —that it was not poſſible for me, or for thoſe who taught me Chriſtianity, to be miſtaken in this.* p. 5. Here lies the myſtery of Iniquity, and here was the blind caſt before the eyes of this unequal combatant, which he had neither wit enough to underſtand himſelf, nor humility enough to learn from others. But I ſhall endeavour to bring this Fox out of his hole by this Argument: Either a ſubjective certainty or infallibility of belief of the Truth of Chriſtianity is neceſſary for particular Chriſtians, or it is not: if it be not neceſſary, then in vain do Papiſts urge this argument, and boaſt ſo much of it, as unanſwerable; whereas now they give it up, and confeſs probable evidence ſufficient for particular Chriſtians, and Infallibility neceſſary onely for the Pope or Councel: and ſo the poor Captain hath loſt his Infallibility, and had beſt think of his old military word, *As you were*, for here the cord is cut aſunder, by which he was drawn over to *Rome*, for now the Proteſtant ſtands upon even ground (at leaſt) with the Papiſt. For ſuppoſe, for once, contradictions were reconciled, and the Popiſh opinion of the Churches infallible authority were true in it ſelf *certitudine objecti*;

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ſo alſo is the Proteſtants opinion concerning the Infallible authority of the Scripture true in it ſelf, and *certitudine objecti*, as the moſt deſperate Papiſts do grant, *Stapleton*, and *Bellarmine*, and all. The Scripture (ſay they) is Divine, and true, and certain in it ſelf, but not *quoad nos*: therefore hitherto there is no difference: now to proceed. If it be a ſufficient foundation for a Romaniſt, that he hath ſuch probable evidence of this doctrine of the Churches Infallibility, why ſhould it not be as ſufficient a foundation for a Proteſtant, that he hath ſuch (nay infinitely more) probable evidence of the doctrine of the Scriptures Infallibility? ſince the evidence of the latter is granted by the Papiſts themſelves, and the evidence of the former not onely denyed and diſputed down by the Proteſtants, but alſo quèſtioned by their own Authors, as I have ſhewed at large. This queſtion I challenge the whole club of Jeſuites, (which happily contributed to this Epiſtle) ſolidly to anſwer. But now on the other ſide, if they will retire to the other part of the Dilemma, and ſay, That a ſubjective Infallibility is neceſſary for particular Chriſtians, then every Papiſt in England not onely hath a Pope in his belly, but hath got his Crown alſo upon his head, and communicates with him in that great Prerogative of Infallibility: and truly I muſt do them juſtice; without doubt every Papiſt in England is as infallible as the Pope himſelf.

4. But if nothing will ſatisfie but Infallibility, let us a little enquire into it, what it is, and where it lies, & what infallible and irreſiſtible demonſtrations the Romaniſts have for this grand principle, for which a man muſt put out the eye of his reaſon, and forſake the conduct of the Scripture, and depoſe the holy Spirit from his Royalty. Certainly it is madneſſe in the higheſt to put us off with conjectures, and ſuppoſitions and imagined probabilities in ſo important an affaire, upon which all the reſt depends.

and

and to which all muſt ſtrike ſaile; ſo then the queſtion will be this, whether this pretence of Infallibility be not a *gratis dictum*, a crude and bold aſſertion, or rather, whether it be evidenced with ſuch ſtrength and clearneſſe, as to compell the aſſent of all reaſonable perſons: And here I ſhall do the Captain and the Popiſh cauſe this right, as to conſider it in its moſt advantageous notion. If there be any Infallibility, moſt certain it is, that it is in the Pope and general Councel together, which is the moſt plauſible and received opinion of the Church of *Rome*. And here it is that our Engliſh Apoſtate, Mr. *Creſſy*, in the laſt Edition of his Book, centers; and here alſo the Captain caſts anchor: *The Prelates of the Church* (ſaith he) *though as men they are fallible, yet when aſſembled in a general Councel with their ſupreme Paſtor, they are ſtill made infallible by the aſſiſtance of the ſame holy Ghoſt, who was as well promiſed to them as to the Apoſtles.*

Now for this notion, I might refer the Captaine and the Reader to what I have ſaid and proved in the foregoing Treatiſe, which when he, or any of his Fathers ſhall ſolidly anſwer, it will be time enough then to conſider it. But becauſe this is the ſole foundation upon which the Papiſts build all the reſt, and Mr. *Creſſy* adjures all Proteſtants, that omitting or deferring all particular diſputes with Catholicks, they would examine this point, Sect. 2. Chap. 19. and becauſe I am reſolved by God's help to ſearch and try where the ſtrength of this *Sampſon* lies, (if there be any in it) I ſhall a little farther conſider it; and if I find his arguments proportionable to his confidence, and that he is as ſolid in proving it, as he is daring in aſſerting it, ſurely he will do the Chriſtian world an inexpreſſible favour, and infinitely oblige all Proteſtants, and he will find us far from the madneſſe of fighting againſt God and our own ſoules. But ſince all is not Gold

that glisters, and our Savour hath commanded us to try the Spirits, and to prove all things, and not to believe men, saying, Lo here is Christ, or, Lo there is Christ; they must not take it amisse, if, after such evident discovery of their manifold impostures, we dare not take all things upon trust from them, nor swallow down so great a morsell without chewing, and enquiring into it.

It seems to be granted on both sides, and the nature of the thing requires it, That this being a grand principle should have the greatest evidence, which things of that nature can bear: and such indeed they pretend for it. So Mr. *Cressy* tells us, That *as this controversy was of infinite importance, Providence hath suitably furnished us with means of satisfaction —infinitely more copious, evident, and powerful, then in any other besides. Exomolog. sect. 2. chap.* 18. And again: *That which I undertake to make evident to I. P. is; that the Church speaking by a general Councel, confirmed by the Pope, is an infallible guide, (and that with more evidence then he can produce for the Scripture it self.)* Appendix to his *Exomologesis chap. 4. num.* 9. It is well that Saying and Doing are two things, or else the Protestant cause had been quite in the dust. If Mr. *Cressy* make this good, his worke is done, if not, it will concern him to remember from whence he is fallen, and repent of his Apostacy. So now we are come to the point, whether the Churches Infallibility be so evidently proved, as they pretend? They affirm, and I deny it: and the grounds of my denial have been a principal part of the foregoing discourse. I shall forbear repetitions, as much as is possible, and shall here only give two arguments to shew, That this pretended evidence of of the doctrine of Infallibility is but one of their μεγαλορρήματα, and a piece of their usual artifice, to give us confident affirmations in stead of evident proofs.

My first reason is taken from the inevidence of this doctrine

doctrine to themſelves, and many of their own Brethren. What a deſperate aſſertion is it, to aſcribe greater evidence to the Churches Infallibility, (which is denied by many of their own Authors,) then to the Divinity of the Scripture? (whoſe evidence is ſo great, that both Proteſtants and Papiſts univerſally acquieſce in it) I have already repreſented the differences and diſſatisfactions of their own Authors in this, ſuppoſed to be, moſt evident point. And certainly, it can be nothing but want of evidence, which hinders the aſſent of thoſe, whoſe intereſt ſo powerfully obligeth them to it. Particularly I have ſhewed the vanity of that pretence of agreement between their divided Authors in the Infallibility of the Pope and a Councel together, and that the ſeveral Partiſans, howſoever they put them both together in name and ſhew, yet in truth they aſcribe the Infallibility entirely to the one or other, either to the Pope alone, or to the Councel alone, and to the other onely in dependance thereupon. Infallibility is not partly in the Pope, and partly in the Councel, but wholly in the Pope, (ſay the Jeſuites,) and from him communicated to the Councel, who are infallible no farther then they have his conſent and concurrence. And on the other ſide it is wholly in the Councel, and in the Pope onely by participation from them, (ſay the Gallican Papiſts, and Anti-Jeſuitical party, and of this mind were thoſe Councels that undertook the cenſuring and removing of Popes themſelves.) And conſequently, the Infallibity of Councels not being evident to the Jeſuites and their party, and the Infallibility of the Pope not being evident to the French Papiſts, and many others, it follows, that there is no evidence at all in either, nor in both together, their own Authors being Judges. For if I can prove to a Jeſuite, That the Pope *in Cathedrâ* is not infallible, he will (and by his principles muſt) grant, That the addition of a Councel doth not

make him infallible. And if I can prove to a French Papiſt, that a general Couucel rightly called and conſtituted is not infallible, he will (and by his principles muſt) acknowledge the Pope's conſent cannot render them infallible: ſo that indeed if either be diſproved, both are diſproved.

Nor doth any thing render this evidence more darke, and the Romiſh cauſe more contemptible, then the conſideration of thoſe poor Fig-leaves, wherewith Mr. *Creſſy* ſeeks to cover his Mothers nakedneſſe in this particular. For when Mr. *Chillingworth* urged this very argument againſt their infallible Judge, that themſelves were divided about it, who it was, whether Pope or Councel &c. all that Mr. *Creſsy* anſwers *ad rem*, is this; That theſe different Authors of theirs are all agreed in that deciſion of the Councel of *Trent*, *It belongs to the Church to be Judg of the true ſenſe of the holy Scripture*: an anſwer ſo deſperate, that it ſhews that man, who could acquieſce in it, to be, if not a Papiſt by intereſt rather then Conſcience, yet at leaſt one given up by God to thoſe ſtrong deluſions, threatned to the Followers of Antichriſt, 2 Theſ. 2. among whom he hath now liſted himſelf. And doth this indeed end the differences? doth he offer that for an Anſwer, which his Adverſary before had acknowldged? and is this all the relief they have towards the ending of all differences, and the ſatisfaction of their conſciences? When *Alexander* was asked, To whom he would leave his Empire? and he anſwered, To the beſt: ſince he did not at all determine, who this *beſt* was, I think no man in his wits will ſay, this was a likely or effectual way to end the differences among the Græcians: It is true the Captains were all agreed *in genere*, that it ſhould be left to the beſt; but ſome thought one beſt, others another, and ſo the diſſenſions continued among them, and were not at all healed by that general agreement. In the very ſame manner

manner, although they be agreed in the general, that the Church muſt judge, ſo long as they continue at variance, and have implacable feuds about it who this Church is, they are not one whit nearer agreement. Suppoſe in former times a queſtion aroſe between the Senate and Emperor of Rome, which was the chief power, and ſupreme Judge of all Civill controverſies; and the Subjects of the Empire were highly divided about it, ſome aſcribing the ſupremacy to the Emperor, others to the Senate: would Mr. *Creſsy* ſay, the Romanes are agreed, becauſe they were all united in this, That the ſupreme power was to end all their controverſies? Suppoſe 3 or 4 Competitors to a Kingdome, and the inhabitants thereof ſeverally divided about them; will any man on this ſide Bedlam ſay, they are all agreed, becauſe agreed in this generall, that the King muſt rule? or muſt not every man acknowledg, that this agreement ſignifies but little, ſo long as they differ about this, which is that King? And is not this the very caſe of the Church of *Rome*? They are all agreed (forſooth) not one diſſenting voice among them: but how? why they are agreed that the Church is the judge. But, Mr. *Creſsy*, the great difference is behind, who is the Church? the Pope, ſay ſome, a Councel ſay others, a Pope and Councel together ſay a third ſort, (and the ſeveral aſſertors of each opinion confute and deſtroy the reſt,) and all that hold any of theſe opinions are univerſally eſteemed good Catholicks, ſaith Mr. *Creſsy* in his Append. *ch.* 4. *num.* 7. So they are good Catholicks that diſpute down the Pope's Infallibility, and they good Catholicks too that diſpute down the Infallibility of Councels, and (for the reaſon before mentioned) they good Catholicks, that reject the infallibility of both together. And therefore tis a mōſt impudent poſition, which Mr. *Creſsy* layes down, (and the Papiſts are obliged to owne,) *That the doctrine of the Churches Infallibility is ſo evident,*

that

that the Protestants are inexcusable, and ἀναπολόγητοι, *that do not receive it*: out of thy own mouth will God judge thee, O thou unfaithful Servant, who hast thus expressed thy self in another place; *To my understanding there is some inhumanity in urging Protestants to more then Catholicks will be obliged to, or to thinke that to Protestants prepossessed with passion and partiality, that can be made evident, which is so far from being evident to some Catholicks, that they renounce it. Appendix* to the *Exomologesis*, ch. 4. num. 7.

To this might be added, as a farther demonstration of the inevidence of this point even to the Romanists themselves, those secret checks which they meet with from their own consciences in the assertion of this supposed Infallibility, discovered by their haltings, and corrections, and tergiversations, and self-contradictions in explication of this new phænomenon. For however Mr. *Cressy* mounts this Infallibility so high, that it must not yield to Scripture it self, yet both himself elsewhere, and their other Authors every where are contented with a far lower proportion. *Bellarmine* (whom Mr. *Cressy* rights and approves) in his comparison of the Infallibility of the Church and Scripture, gives the preheminence to Scripture in five several respects. See *Cressy sect.* 2. *ch.* 21. *Truth, and our obligation to believe it, is in an higher degree in Scripture, then in the decisions of the Church. Cressy Appendix chap.* 5. *n.* 2. And this Infallibility of the Church, though they will not suffer us to call it humane and moral, yet they dare not assert it to be Divine, but onely after a sort, and in some manner Divine, as the Author of *Laud's labyrinth* informes us. And this Infallibility they farther confesse is not in way of immediate revelation or inspiration from God, but in the way of argumentation and discourse. And here too they are wonderful cautious; for it is acknowledged by *Bellarmine* and

Stapleton

Stapleton, and ſubſcrib'd by Mr *Creſsy*, That the Church is fallible in the premiſes, but infallible in the concluſion. *Creſsy ubi ſupra*, and *ſect.* 2. *chap.* 32. and *Append. chap.* 5. *In the deciſions of the Church, the ſimple concluſion decided is onely accounted infallibly true, not ſo the principles upon which it depends, or reaſons by which it is proved.* Really theſe Romiſh Prieſts are admirable fellows in all things: Admirable Builders! *Vitruvius* himſelf might learn Architecture from them, for they can teach him how to build a ſolid and durable Edifice upon a rotten foundation: Admirable Logitians! *Ariſtotle* might go to School to them, and learn ſuch Leſſons as were above his apprehenſion, for it is reſolved, he muſt blot out his Axiomes, *Concluſio ſequitur partem debiliorem*, and, *Non debet eſse plus in concluſione quàm in præmiſſis*, and *Ex falſis nil niſi falſum*: The Colledge of Jeſuites at *Rome* are ready to make good the contrary againſt him, when *Plato*'s great year ſhall bring him and them together upon the Stage. Admirable Divines! that have outdone their Lord and Maſter, and in ſpight of whatſoever is ſaid by him *Luk.* 6.43,44. will, if he pleaſe, maintain a diſpute with him upon this *Theſis*, *That a corrupt tree can bring forth good fruit, and that of thornes men may gather figs, and of a Brambl-buſh grapes:* and this ſhall be not probably defended, but infallibly demonſtrated. For it were a ſilly thing to think, that they that are infallible Divines ſhould be but fallible Diſputants. But to return: The inevidence of this notion of the Churches Infallibility may ſufficiently appear from Mr. *Creſsy*'s own expreſſions, (which have been obſerved by others) who by the evidence of the Truth was forced to this acknowledgment, That *Infallibility is an infortunate word, that Mr. Chillingworth hath combated it with too great ſucceſs, ſo that I could wiſh* (ſaith he) *the word were forgotten, or at leaſt laid by*, whereas all, that underſtand any thing, know, that it

was not the word, but the thing which he combated; and his arguments were not nominal againſt the Title, but real againſt the thing it ſelf. It is true, ſince this paſſage was publiſhed and taken notice of, Mr. *Creſſy* (having doubtleſſe been ſeverely ſchool'd by his Superiors for ſuch a dangerous paſſage) is grown more cautious, and hath ſtretched his wit (and I fear his conſcience too) to palliate his aſſertion, and make an honourable retreat: and he honeſtly acquaints us with his deſign, i. e. being *crafty to catch the Proteſtants with guile.* Sect. 2. ch. 21. He that reads the Appendix to the ſecond Edition of his *Exomologeſis*, will eaſily diſcern the trepidations of a guilty conſcience, whilſt ſometimes you ſhall find him tacitly denying the Churches Infallibility properly ſo called, and contenting himſelf with great Probability in the room of it: at other times you will meet him crying up this Infallibility in expreſs or equivalent terms, and in moſt places having no *ſalvo* for himſelf but this; That his aſſertion, and the Proteſtants diſputation did proceed upon the miſtaken notion of Infallibility, which the Proteſtants advanced to an higher pitch then ever the Church of *Rome* did, and ſo fought againſt an image that themſelves had ſet up: which is ſo notorious a falſehood, that if Mr. *Creſſy*'s wit, and memory, and conſcience had not all failed him together, he could hardly have run into it; ſince all Proteſtants of any note ever did, and particularly Mr. *Chillingworth* doth diſpute againſt the Churches Infallibility, onely in that ſenſe and degree which Mr. *Creſſy* upon matureſt advice in this ſecond Edition hath thought fit to expreſſe in theſe words: That *God will preſerve his Church in all truth, ſo as to ſecure all believers, that ſhe can neither deceive them, nor be deceived her ſelf.* ſect. 2. chap. 21. Did ever any Proteſtant, that underſtood himſelf, or the point pretend to more? Not Mr. *Chillingworth* I am ſure. They all knew and granted, that abolute infallibi-

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lity was Gods Prerogative, and neither pretended by the Church of Rome, nor was that opinion by Proteſtants faſtned upon them: The onely queſtion was, whether God did vouchſafe ſuch infallible guidance to the Church, that ſhe could not erre in her decrees, and deciſions; This Papiſts affirmed, and Proteſtants denied: and let me adde, that this Infallibility is as high as was ever aſcribed to the Prophets or Apoſtles and Penmen of the Holy Scripture: And although their infallibility be ſaid to be larger or greater *extenſivè*, becauſe in them it reached to all ſentences, and words, and Arguments, yet the Romaniſts themſelves cannot ſay it is higher or greater *intenſivè*, and the Articles of Faith or concluſive deciſions decreed by Councels, are in their opinion as infallible, as the ſame are when they are laid down in the Scripture. This was the Notion Mr *Chillingworth* combated againſt, with ſo great ſucceſſe as *Creſſy* confeſſeth.

The ſecond Argument to prove the inevidence of this notion of the Churches infallibility, I ſhall take from the impertinency and feebleneſſe of thoſe crutches or reaſons wherewith they indeavour to ſupport it: I obſerve the ſumme and ſtrength of what he hath to ſay in this point is reducible to five heads.

The firſt and great pretence is this, *Take away Infallibility and you deſtroy all Authority; all Authority, that is not Infallible is meer Faction and Rebellion, and Authority that reacheth onely to the outward appearance, or the purſe.* Creſſy *Appen: ch.7. num.2.* And elſewhere Infallibility and Authority are in effect all one as applied to the Church, *Ibid c.5. n.14.* And the aſſertions of the Churches Authority which are frequent in the Fathers Mr *Creſſy* urgeth as if they had been directly levelled at the Churches infallibility, *Exomolog. Sect.2. chap.19.* Nay, ſo daring is this man in his Argument, that not contented with his own

own pretended ſatisfaction in it, he will needs obtrude the ſame opinion upon that Noble Lord *Falkland* (which it is ſufficiently known he abhorred) *viz.* that if *the Catholick Churches Authority and Infallibility were oppoſed all other Churches muſt expire*: The Authority of the Engliſh Church would be an airy fantaſme *&c. Append. chap. 6. num. 9.*

For Anſwer, I durſt appeale to the conſcience of this very man, but that Apoſtates in the Faith do at the ſame time make ſhipwrack of a good conſcience: let any Romaniſt that is not prodigall of his damnation, ſeriouſly conſider the groſſe falſhood of this bold ſuppoſition. What! no Authority without Infallibility? Belike there is no Authority in the King, becauſe no Infallibility. He will ſay Civill Authority is but externall; But Eccleſiaſticall reacheth the conſcience, and commands the beliefe of the inward man: Mr *Creſſy* knew this to be a *gratis dictum* and juſtly denied by Proteſtants, and therefore he ſhould have proved it, but crude ſuppoſitions and imperious dictates do paſſe among Romaniſts for ſolid demonſtrations: Yet againe I would aske Mr *Creſſy* whether the Aſſembly of the Clergy in *France* have Authority over that Church, or no: If he deny it I refer him to his brethren there for an Anſwer: If he grant it, then Authority may be without Infallibility: Againe I aske him whether the Pope without a Councell have Authority over the Church or no: If he deny it, 'tis at his perill; if he affirme it, then his Argument is in great jeopardy: For Proteſtants are allowed to disbelieve the Popes perſonall Infallibility: And he confeſſeth (I gave you his own words before) that good Catholicks deny it and diſpute againſt it: Yet once more; When generall Councels have been called to determine the pretenſions of Anti-Popes, or to depoſe uſurping Popes, or when they have had differences with the Popes,

I demand whether theſe Councels had any Authority or no? To ſay they had none, or that their Authority was but an airy fantaſme I think Mr *Creſſy* will not dare; and if they had, then either a Councell without the Pope is Infallible (which moſt Learned Papiſts now deny, and if Mr *Creſſy* be of another mind let him tell us) or Authority may be without Infallibility.

In a word that the World may ſee the complexion of an Apoſtates conſcience, This very man will grant that there is an Authority in the Superiour over his Convent, in every Biſhop over his Dioceſſe, in ever Generall over his order, and a weighty Authority too (as their vaſſals feel by ſad experience) yet I hope theſe are not Infallible, E. the more impudent is he that argues from Authority to Infallibility.

A ſecond Argument is much of the ſame complexion, taken from the ſtile and practiſe of generall Councels which was to propoſe their Doctrines as infallible truths, and to command all Chriſtians under the paine of Anathema, and eternall damnation to believe them for ſuch: *That Authority which ſhould ſpeak thus not being Infallible, would be guilty of the greateſt tyranny and cruelty, and uſurpation that ever was in the World.* Append. chap. 4. n. 9.

This hath been fully anſwered before, and therefore I ſhall here content my ſelfe with theſe two reflections.

1. The utmoſt of this Argument (abſtracting from the invidious expreſſions he here clothes it with, that it may have in tenour what it wants in ſtrength) would be no more then this: That generall Councels in ſuch a way of proceeding were miſtaken and were liable to error: A propoſition which he knew very well the Proteſtants did univerſally own, and I hope well may, ſince the Jeſuites (ſo great a part and ſupport of the Roman Church) have

have and do acknowledge that generall Councels and their decrees are not infallible untill the Popes consent be added, yet such Councels (as is notoriously known) have used to put their Anathema's to their decrees before the Popes assent was given: And yet forsooth (if you will believe a man that hath cast away his Faith) this Argument is more evident then we can produce for the Scripture it selfe (for so he saith, *ibid.*)

2. These Anathema's do not at all prove that such Councels either were or thought themselves Infallible: It is true, it is an Argument they thought one of these two things, either that the Doctrine proposed by them was Infallibly true (as indeed they did) or that their Authority was infallibly certaine (which they never pretended) either of these were a sufficient gronnd for such Anathema's; and therefore his Argument is infirme proceeding *à genere ad speciem, animal est, E. homo.* They owned Infallibility E. they owned it in their Authority: Particular Pastors have a power to Anathematize and do so in case of Excommunication of Hereticks. Are they therefore infallible? If it be said they do it onely in pursuance and execution of the decrees of Councels: I Answer: If such persons (confessedly fallible) may Anathematize them that renounce the Doctrines delivered in Councels, because supposed to be Infallibly true, why may not the same persons Anathematize them that renounce the Doctrines expressely delivered in Scripture, which all grant to be infallibly true? Againe, if we look into the Records of Councels wee shall find that this practise of Anathematizing was not onely in use in generall, but also in particular aud Provinciall Councells which are confessed to be fallible: *E.* Mr *Cressy* look to your Arguments and conscience better; once more, The Popes Anathemas all the World rings of, yet you have seen his Infallibility is denied by many and Learned Papists, and they

they too ſuch as are univerſally eſteemed good Catholicks, ſaith Mr *Creſſy* Append. chap 4. num. 7. Therefore how durſt he ſay, Anathema's are evidences of Infallibility?

The third Argument is taken from the promiſes of Infallibility made to this Church. *This Doctrine of the Churches Infallibility is the moſt expreſſe in Scriptures*, ſaith Mr *Creſſy Sect.2. chap.26.n.5.* I ſuppoſe he told us ſo upon the ſame account that the old Painter wrot under his picture, This is a Lion, for fear ſome ſhould have miſtaken it for a Bull, for truely if he had not ſaid it was moſt expreſſe there, any rationall man would have ſworn the contrary.

I confeſſe I thought Mr *Creſſy* (as well as Mr *White* and other Traditionall Doctors) had been ſick of thoſe pretences, and ſufficiently diſcovered the impertinency of them to their purpoſe: and really when I read over the Scriptures quoted by him to prove this Infallibility, and conſider how inſignificant they are to his buſineſſe, and how plainly, and fully, and frequently they have been anſwered by Proteſtants, (which he doth not here reply to) I muſt not diſſemble that I find a great difficulty to believe his conſcience could be ſatisfied therewith, ſure I am whileſt he was a Proteſtant (if he underſtood himſelfe) he would have entertained ſuch proofs with contempt: I dare confidently ſay that moſt of the Scripture-allegations produced by the Quakers (in defence of their abſurd and ridiculous opinions) are every whit as pertinent as any that are here cited: It is true they are materiall to that purpoſe to which they are cited by the Fathers, *viz.* to prove the Churches perpetuity and juſt Authority; but for Infallibility, how far the Fathers were from believing that I hope hath been made ſufficiently evident from the foregoing Diſcourſe, where alſo particular Anſwers have been given to their Arguments

ments from theſe places, which when they ſolidly vindicate, it will deſerve, and (ὡν θεὸς θέλῃ) ſhall have our conſideration. At preſent I ſhall content my ſelf with this generall animadverſion.

Thoſe Scripturall promiſes pretended for the Churches Infallibility, either they do of themſelves, without the Churches ſence and expoſition, evidently and ſolidly prove the point they are brought for, or they do not; if they ſay they do, then other paſſages of Scripture (undoubtedly farre more plaine and poſitive for diverſe doctrines rejected by the Papiſts) do of themſelves, without the Churches ſence and expoſition prove thoſe points they are brought for, and ſo Scripture may decide controverſies; if they ſay not, then the Churches Infallibility muſt be ſuppoſed, before it can be proved from thoſe Texts, which is I confeſſe agreeable to the Roman-Catholick way of Diſputation, and fit for them that cannot endure reaſon ſhould be judge, but I am ſure it will never ſatisfie any man that hath any care of his conſcience or Salvation: But I can tell the Reader good newes, and that which is ſtrange too among Romaniſts, who uſe to confute Proteſtants by the meer naming of thoſe Texts that have been ſubſtantially vindicated an hundred times. Mr *Creſſy* hath one Chapter entitled the *Validity of ſuch Texts* &c. ſo it is called, but I doubt it was the Printers miſtake for invalidity, as will appeare upon peruſall: He offers but one Argument for proofe of this Capitall Aſſertion, upon which all the Papacy depends, and it is this: *The Antient Fathers do uſually Argue againſt their Hereticks and Schiſmaticks from thoſe promiſes, that Chriſts Church ſhould continue for ever, and that the gates of Hell ſhould not prevaile againſt her: Now* (ſaith he) *if theſe promiſes of Chriſt be not Infallible and abſolute* and that *Church Viſible:* What then? then woe to the poor Fathers, *then the Writings of theſe Fathers will*

will prove to be the moſt fooliſh, impertinent, jugling, yea blaſphemous and pernicious diſcourſes that ever were. So *Creſſy* Sect. 2. chap. 28. that is to ſay (if we take the notion out of this odious dreſſe) they uſed fallacious Arguments: Very good! And is this that, that ſatisfied Mr *Creſſy's* conſcience? O the modeſty of the man! you ſee a little thing ſatisfies him; but if he will cheat himſelfe, let him not think to cheat us with ſuch ridiculous Arguments.

1. The utmoſt of what would follow is that the Antient Fathers whoſe Writings are extant were Fallible, and liable to miſtakes: A Propoſition which I have formerly proved, and the Popiſh Doctors themſelves agree with us therein, I ſuppoſe Mr *Creſſy* will not diſſent.

2. If upon every impertinent and unconcluding Argument produced by Fathers, Councels, or Popes, againſt ſuppoſed Hereticks, I ſhould make this inference that they were all Juglers, Blaſphemers, *&c.* Mr *Creſſy* would think it a very harſh cenſure: When their great Lords and Maſters argue at this rate (as he knowes who did) Ariſe *Peter* kill and eat, and here are two Swords: *Ergo*, the Pope hath civill and Spirituall power over all men: They that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God: E. Prieſts ſhould not be married: God made man after his own Image: E. Images are lawfull. Will Mr *Creſſy* now ſay theſe were all Juglers, Blaſphemers, *&c?* and their Writings the moſt fooliſh, impertinent, pernicious Diſcourſes that ever were? either then let Mr *Creſſy* qualify his cenſure there, or apply it here.

3. If the Fathers were ſuppoſed infallible, yet they might uſe impertinent and unconcluding Arguments: You muſt remember our Maſters the Romaniſts while they aſſert the infallibility of the Pope and Councell, they cautiouſly diſtinguiſh between the concluſion and the

the mediums or Arguments to prove it: I will onely mind you of him whom they all ſo highly approve and applaud *i. e. Stapleton* (whom Mr *Creſſy* followes and the reſt of them) who (as you ſaw) limits this infallibility to the Concluſion, not to the premiſes or Argument: So if the Fathers were infallible (as you ſee and the Papiſts confeſſe they are not) yet this being onely in the Concluſion, it will not at all ſecure them from impertinency and error in their Arguments or mediums uſed to confirme the concluſions, which is all that this Diſcourſe of Mr *Creſſy* pretends to prove: So now judge whether the Printer was not a knave (for ſure the Author could not be ſo ſince he is a *Benedictine*) to ſet in the front of this Argument, *The Validity*, &c.

But you know *non omnia poſſumus omnes*: Peradventure Mr *Creſſy* is a better reſpondent then opponent, and though he cannot at all prove his own aſſertion, yet he will at leaſt ſolidly Anſwer his Adverſaries: But alas! here he is ſo jejune that it moves my pitty; for when Mr *Chillingworth* pleaded that theſe promiſes were onely conditionall, if Chriſtians ſhould make uſe of Gods means ---The Church ſhould continue: Hereto (ſaith *Creſſy*) the anſwer is very ready, Oh the benefit of a ready wit when attended with an eaſy Conſcience! 1. *There is no warrant from any circumſtance in thoſe Texts for ſuch a new interpretation.*

I will not ingage in that Argument, onely I will referre a parallel place to his conſideration: It is ſaid particularly concerning Jeruſalem (which never was ſaid concerning Rome) *I have hallowed this houſe---to put my name therein for ever, and mine eyes and mine heart ſhall be there perpetually*, 1 Kings 9.3. And it is again repeated concerning that houſe, that *the Lord had ſaid, In Jeruſalem ſhall my Name be for ever*, 2 Chron. 33.4. Then (if he have a conſcience) let him Anſwer, whether there be not

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as much warrant from these Texts to prove this promise to *Jerusalem* to be infallible and unconditional, (which they grant it was not) as from the other Texts to prove them to be so to the Church of *Rome*. He need not take day to answer it.

His second Answer is wholly *ad hominem*, (and the other you will say was little *ad rem*,) That *Mr. Chillingworth applies this to future times onely, not to past or present, and therefore it concernes not the dispute in hand about the Romane Catholick Church, which all English Protestants acknowledg to be a true Church of Christ.* Just so they would perswade their Proselytes, that all Protestants grant that theirs is a safe way, and Salvation to be had ordinarily in the communion of their Church; whereas neither the one nor the other are true. But what if Protestants do, and Mr. *Chillingworth* did grant their Church to be a true Church, doth it therefore follow, these Texts were pertinently alledged to prove it? or did Mr. *Chillingworth* say, these promises were absolute for time past or present, and conditional onely for the future? no such matter: but these are onely his own dreams, and shufflings, who (*pro more*) when he cannot answer his Adversary, indeavours to blind his Reader. I have onely one thing more to observe upon that which (he tels us Mr. *Chillingworth* saw it) *That if there were such promises of Indefectibility, none could challenge them but the Romane Church, since she onely claims them, all others lay down their claime.* But that also is no more solid then the rest: for since this promise of Indefectibility is general and indefinite, it no more belongs to *Rome* then to any other particular Church: neither have they any more interest in the promise, because they boldly claime the Monopoly of it, (since an Usurpers claime gives him no just Title to the thing.) Nor have other Churches the lesse interest in it, because their conscience and modesty

will not ſuffer them to appropriate it to themſelves, (for though they extend this promiſe of Indefectibility to the whole Church, yet they reap the comfort and benefit of it, in as much as they are true members of that Church, and not upon any local or particular conſideration.)

There is a fourth argument behind, taken from the Tradition or teſtimony of the preſent Church: but this I have diſcourſed at large, and I hope diſcovered the folly of that new device: thither I refer the Reader.

A fifth argument there is, and that is all I find in Mr. *Creſſy*, (for I have diligently ſearched him, and God is my witneſſe I have indeavoured to ſingle out the ſtrongeſt and moſt plauſible paſſages in him, which I had not anſwered before,) and that is taken from the Churches Unity: *One Church there cannot be, without one faith; nor one faith, where differences are irreconcilable; and no reconciling of differences, but by an Authority, and that infallible. Append. ch. 6. n. 3.* And again: *The Sun ſhines not more clear* (I ſuppoſe he means in the Cloyſters of his Convent) *then that there is no poſſible Unity without Authority, nor no Chriſtian Unity without an Infallible Authority. ch. 7. n. 2.*

Anſ. Very well: it being premiſed, That their onely infallible Authority is, as Mr. *Creſſy* ſtates it, the Church ſpeaking by a general Councel confirmed by the Pope, *Appen. chap. 4. num. 9.* then, if this argument be ſolid, let Mr. Creſſy take what follows: Then there was neither one Church, nor one Faith, for the firſt 300 years, when there was no general Councel: then when the Pope dies, or his Sea is vacant other wayes (as it oft hath been) and when there is no Councel (as now there is none) there is no Unity in the Church of *Rome:* what thinks this man of the Gallican Church, which (unleſſe they be throughly Jeſuited) do ſtill hold (as they uſed to do) that the Pope, perſonally conſidered, is not infallible, but

but onely with a general Councel: will he juſtify it in the Aſſembly of the French Clergy, that they have at this day no unity among them, and no way to reconcile their differences, becauſe they have no infallible Authority? But I ſhall not waſt my time any longer with theſe impertinent and miſcalled arguments: I ſhall leave the point with this ſhort *Memorandum*, That it is a plain evidence of the deſperatneſſe of their cauſe, that all the great wit, and vaſt learning, and deep cunning of the Romiſh Doctors can furniſh them with no better arguments then theſe. And ſince this is all that Mr. Creſſy can pretend for his Apoſtacy, I would intreat him in his next to furniſh me with ſome Anſwers to thoſe that ſuſpect his Change was not from Conſcience, but Diſcontent or Paſſion, or Worldly Intereſt, (as affairs then ſtood:) for I confeſſe I am at a loſſe, and know not what to ſay for him; and the rather, becauſe the pretended motives of his Converſion are ſo ridiculouſly abſurd, and incredible, among which I find two that deſerve a ſpecial remark. One is the ſcandalous perſonal qualities of *Luther* and *Calvin*, which, if all that he ſaith of them were true and material, (as it is either notoriouſly falſe, or inconſiderable,) yet it amounts to nothing againſt the Proteſtant cauſe, ſince though we own them for eminent perſons, and worthy inſtruments, yet we readily acknowledge, they were lyable to error, and ſubject to paſſions and infirmities, no leſſe then other men; nor did we ever make them the pillars and grounds of the Goſpel, or the foundation and rule of our Faith. But that this ſhould occaſion his Change, I confeſſe is beyond the faith of Miracles to believe. This is prodigious, That the ſuppoſed miſtakes or miſcarriages of two particular Proteſtant Doctors ſhould really have greater influence to turn him from the Proteſtant Religion, then the real Blaſphemies, and abominable filthineſſes of their Maſters and Pillars

of their Faith and Church, viz. the Popes, ſhould have to alienate him from the Popiſh Religion: and theſe things not feigned by Adverſaries, (as moſt of their Calumnies againſt *Luther* and *Calvin* are) but acknowledged by their own Authors, who have left us a particular account of the ſeveral ſorts of their villanies: ſo many Blaſphemers, as *John* 13. *Julius* 3. &c. ſo many Hereticks, as *Boniface* 8. *John* 23. ſo many Conjurers, as *Sylveſter* the ſecond, and his Succeſſors for many ſucceſſions; ſo many Whoremongers, ſo many Sodomites, Poyſoners, Inceſtuous, and what not? 150 Popes (ſaith *Genebrard*) rahter Apoſtatical then Apoſtolical perſons. And yet this tender-conſcienced man, who knew all theſe things, and could bear with all this, and a thouſand more ſuch infirmities in the Popes, was ſo ſqueamiſh, that he was not able to endure the ſcandals of *Luther* and *Calvin*. And another motive he addes, not at all inferior to the former, viz. The bloudy commotions of the *Calviniſts*, and the ſanguinary Lawes and cruel execution of them upon Catholick Prieſts in England: And this was a great offence to him, who was well acquainted with the Maſſacres of *France*, of *Germany*, and the Low countries, and the *Engliſh* too in Popiſh times, who knew the hiſtory of the barbarous cruelties of the Inquiſition torments, who himſelf had been an eye and ear-witneſſe of the inhumane butcheries of above one hundred thouſand innocent Proteſtants in *Ireland*. But all this did not move the good man at all: he could ſwallow Camels, but a Gnat hath choaked him. O Diveliſh Hypocriſy! But God will not be mocked, and I hope men that have any ſenſe will not eaſily be deceaved to believe the ſincerity of that mans Converſion, which is brought on by ſuch ridiculous Motives. But to return.

For a cloſe of this great point, I ſhall leave three things to the conſideration of any diſcreet and conſcientious

ous Reader, and particularly of our two Engliſh Apoſtates, with whom I am now treating, if they have any ſenſe of Eternity or Conſcience left.

1. That the principal Texts of Scripture, and arguments urged by them and others for the Infallibility of the Pope and Councel together, either prove nothing to their purpoſe, or prove more then they would have or dare aſſert, i. e. they prove either the Pope or Councel to be infallible by themſelves, and without any reference to the other, and are accordingly pleaded by each party for their opinion. As for inſtance: *Thou art Peter, upon this rock* &c. *I will give unto thee the keyes* &c. *And Simon—I have prayed, that thy Faith fail not:* and the like. If theſe Texts prove any Infallibility, the prove they Infallibility of the Pope, or St. *Peter*'s Succeſſor, whether with or without a Councel. So on the other ſide, the Texts of Scripture pleaded for the Infallibility of Councels from what was ſaid to or of all the Apoſtles: *He that heareth you, heareth me. It ſeemed good to the holy Ghoſt and us. Where two or three are gathered together. I am with you to the end of the world*: If theſe Texts prove any Infallibility, they prove the Infallibility of all the Governours of the Church, and Succeſſors of the Apoſtles, at leaſt when they are aſſembled together, without any ſpecial reference to the Pope, who is but one of them. And becauſe it is ſufficiently evident, that theſe places do not prove the infallibility of thoſe, of whom they are acknowledged primarily and formally to ſpeak, (which is ſo evident, that we have thouſands of the moſt learned and reſolved Papiſts conſenting to us herein, as is before proved,) it is therefore a ſtrange preſumption to pretend theſe places cogent proofs of the infallibility of them, of whom theſe Texts are confeſſed not to ſpeak ſave onely by implication: and conſequently the infallibility of Pope and Councel together, (which is the chief retreat of the moſt ſub-

tile and cautious Papiſts) is deſtitute of ſolid proof, and an ungrounded aſſertion.

2 If all that theſe men ſay were granted, that a general Councel confirmed by the Pope were the infallible Judge, yet ſince there is now no ſuch thing, (nor like to be,) as a general Councel in the Church of *Rome*, but the Pope ſtands upon his own legs, therefore the Church of *Rome* at this day is not infallible, and hath no infallible Judge, and no way to end their controverſies, nor any advantage above Proteſtants therein. If they ſay, the Pope hath the aſſiſtance and concurrence of general Councels in their writings and Decrees, I anſwer: The infallible Judge, which they plead for, muſt according to their principles be a living judge, and therefore requires the exiſtence of the Councel, as well as of the Pope. I would aske Mr. *Creſſy* this queſtion: Is the Pope infallible in his expoſition and application of the Decrees of Councels, or no? if he be, then the Pope alone is infallible without a Councel, (which himſelf confeſſeth is a propoſition ſo harſh, that Proteſtants ſhould not be urged to acknowledge it:) if he be not, then they have no infallible judge at *Rome* at this time, ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι.

3. Since the preſent Romaniſts have now no Anchorhold but the Pope's Infallibility, (for general Councel there is none,) and by Mr. *Creſſy*'s argument, if there be no Infallibility, there is no Authority, and therefore no Unity, and therefore no Faith: I ſhall deſire the Reader to reflect upon the character of that perſon, who is ſo boldly aſſerted the Supreme Infallible Judge of all controverſies in Religion: I will not take it from Proteſtants (leaſt they ſhould be thought partial,) but as it is drawn by a Papiſt & he too one *non è multis*, one ſo eminent for learning and prudence, and truſtineſs, that he was imployed by the French Biſhops to manage that great affaire againſt the Jeſuits at *Rome*: it is St. *Amour*, in that famous & known

known book, his Journal concerning the Tranſactions at *Rome*, relating to the five Propoſitions controverted between the *Moliniſts* and *Janſeniſts*, where it is left upon Record, *in perpetuam rei memoriam*, That when he ſollicited the Pope (*Innocent* the Tenth) to decide that controverſy, and to that end *preſented a paper to him, deſiring him to read it, the Pope* (ſaith my Author) *would not receive and read it, becauſe he ſaid this would engage him further, and oblige him to too great toyles, as he knew the diſcuſſion of this matter required, even of ſuch as had applyed themſelves to that ſtudy all their time, but much more pains muſt it coſt him then others; becauſe* (ſaid he, they are the Popes own words) *it is not my profeſſion, beſides that I am old, I have never ſtudyed Divinity*: *Part.* 3. *chap.* 12. And yet this is the ground and pillar of Truth, this is the prime ſubject of Infallibility, the great Judge of all controverſies, (to whom Scripture, Reaſon, Spirit, all muſt vaile,) whoſe Deciſions muſt be taken for the Oracles of God. And the ſame Pope *Innocent* the Tenth tels this ſtory of a predeceſſor of his, *Clement* the 8. *who* (ſaith he) *after he had cauſed this matter* (viz. the queſtion between the *Janſeniſts* and *Jeſuites*) *to be debated in his preſence for a long time by the moſt excellent men, after he had ſtudied them himſelf with very great care,* (*ſo that as he remembred, ſome toook occaſion thereby to ſay, that Clement the* 8. *began very old to ſtudy Divinity,*) *yet he could not at laſt decide any thing therein, but was fain to impoſe a perpetual ſilence upon both ſides.* This is the man that muſt infallibly decide all controverſies, that could not decide this, and we (forſooth) muſt all venture our ſoules upon his unerring guidance, that is not convinced of it himſelf, and our Papiſts moſt impudently aſſert the Pope's Infallibility, who modeſtly acknowledged his own ignorance and inſufficiency. Theſe things I hope may abundantly ſuffice for the demoliſhing of the grounds of their Faith, I muſt

now ſpeak ſomething to the eſtabliſhing of ours. The rather, becauſe the Captain requires it in his Anſwerer, not to proceed in the way of Negatives, not to reſt in pulling down, but to aſſert what we would eſtabliſh. And Mr. *Creſsy* takes notice of Mr. *Chillingworth* and his book, That he was better in pulling down buildings, then raiſing new ones, and that he hath managed his Sword much more dexterouſly then his Buckler; and that Proteſtants do neither own and defend the poſitive grounds which *Chillingworth* laid, nor provide themſelves of any ſafer Defence. *Exomolog. ſect.2. chap.3. num.4.*

To which it might ſuffice in general to reply, that if once the grounds of their Faith be demoliſhed, and their great pretenſions of ſupreme and infallible Authority ſubverted; if it be proved, that neither the Pope, nor Councels, nor Church of *Rome* be infallible, then the Proteſtant Churches at leaſt ſtand upon even ground with the Church of *Rome,* and whatſoever they can reaſonably pretend for the ſtabliſhing of their Faith, will tend to the ſecuring of ours; and if Proteſtants have no ſolid and ſufficient foundation for their Beliefe, neither have the Papiſts any better: and then one of theſe 2 things will follow: Either that Scripture, Reaſon, and the concurring teſtimony of former Ages, and Churches, and Fathers are a firme Baſis for a Chriſtians Faith, independently upon the churches authority, and infallibility, (and this is a certain Truth, though utterly deſtructive to the church of *Rome,*) or elſe (which I tremble to ſpeak, and yet theſe deſperate perſons are not afraid to aſſert,) that the Chriſtian Faith hath no ſolid ground to reſt upon, (I mean without the Churches infallible Authority, which is now ſuppoſed to be diſcarded and diſproved.) Now here it muſt be confeſſed, that ſome Proteſtants expreſſe themſelves too unwarily in the point, whereby they give the Adverſary ſome ſeeming advantage and occaſion

occaſion to repreſent our Doctrine to their ignorant and deluded Proſelytes, as diverſified into three or four ſeverall and contrary opinions, about the judge and rule of Faith, which ſome are ſaid to aſcribe to the Scriptures, others to the Spirit of God within them, others to reaſon, and others to univerſall Tradition, whereas indeed all theſe are really agreed, and theſe are not ſo many ſeverall judges or rules, but all in their places and orders do happily correſpond to the conſtitution of the Proteſtant ground of Faith, which I ſhall make thus appeare by the help of a threefold diſtinction.

1. VVe muſt diſtinguiſh between the judge and rule of Faith, which the Papiſts cunningly, and ſome others inconſiderately confound, for inſtance: If I ſhould aſſert the Church to be the Judge, or Reaſon to be the judge, yet the Scripture is the rule to which the Judge is tyed, and from which if it ſwerve, ſo far forth its ſentence is null.

2. VVe muſt diſtinguiſh between Judge and Judge, and here we muſt take notice of a triple Judge according to the triple Court, *forum cæli, forum Eccleſiæ, forum conſcientiæ*, the Court of Heaven, the Court of the Church, and the Court of Conſcience. Accordingly there are three Judges.

1. The Supreme and truly Infallible Judge of all controverſies, and that is God and Chriſt who appropriates it to himſelfe to be the alone Law-giver, *Jam.* 4.12. And this is ſo proper to God, that the bleſſed Apoſtles durſt not aſcribe it to themſelves, (however their ſucceſſors are grown more hardy) not for that we have dominion over your Faith, 2 *Cor.* 1.24. This judge is Lord over all both in the Church and in the conſcience, which are all ſubordinate to him.

2. There is an externall and politicall Judge, placed by God in the Church, and theſe are the Governors whom

whom Christ hath placed in and over the Church: and these are subordinate to the Supreme Judge, who if they really contradict His soveraigne Sentence and higher Authority, and require things evidently contrary to the will of their and our master, must give their subjects leave to argue with the Apostle *Peter* (and I tell you it was an unhappy accident that St *Peter* should furnish the Protestants with such an Argument, as would puzzle all his Successors to Answer) *Whether it be right in the sight of God to harken unto you more then unto God, judge ye*, Acts 4.19.

3. There is an internall and secret Judge, placed by God in every particular person, and that you may call Reason or Conscience; for as God hath made every man a reasonable Creature, and capable to judge of his own actions, so he hath not given that faculty (no more then the rest) to be for ever suspended, and wrapt in a Napkin, but to be duly exercised, nor would he have men like bruit beasts that have no understanding, but every where calls upon them to Judge: *I speak to wise men, judge ye what I say*, 1 Cor.10.15. And the service God requires of every man must be λογικὴ λατρεία *reasonable service*, Rom. 12 1. And every man must be ready and able to give a reason of the hope that is in him, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15.

3. We must distinguish between an instrument and an argument. And here lies the Golden mean by which a man may avoid those contrary Heresies both equidistant from the Truth, I mean the Socinian on the one hand, and the Papist on the other, whereof the former would make reason a soveraigne, universall judge to which even Scripture it selfe must vaile: And some go so high that I remember one of them saith: If the Scripture should say in expresse termes, That Christ is the most High God, I should not believe it (becaus utterly repugnant

repugnant to reaſon) but ſeek ſome other ſence of thoſe words. And the latter (the Romaniſts) would quite put reaſon out of office, and *in terminis* ſubmit to a blind or implicit obedience without any examination, whereas the truth lies between both. Reaſon or Conſcience is not an Argument (I meane in matters of Faith purely ſuch) that is, I do not therefore believe ſuch a Doctrine of Faith to be true, becauſe my reaſon or conſcience, in it ſelfe and by vertue of rationall and extraſcripturall Arguments tels me it is true (for this were to make my reaſon the rule and ſtandard of Truth) but my reaſon or conſcience believes ſuch a thing to be true, becauſe it reads or hears ſuch Arguments and evidences from the Scripture as are the undoubted πιμήρια of the Truth. And thus reaſon is the inſtrument by which I apprehend the Argument which compels my beliefe: So againe the Spirit of God (as in this controverſy it is taken for the gifts or graces of a believing Soule) or its ordinary ſuggeſtions in my mind are not the argument by which I am convinced of the Truth of a Doctrine, (for I may be deceived by a falſe ſpirit under the Title of Gods, and I am commanded to trie the Spirits and not to believe every Spirit) but it is the inſtrument (as I may ſo ſpeak) by which I am enabled to underſtand the weight and force of thoſe Arguments which are recorded (ſuppoſe) in the Scriptures, or rather to ſpeak moſt properly, reaſon is the inſtrument, and Gods Spirit is the great helper and aſſiſtant by which that inſtrument is elevated and fitted to diſcerne thoſe lineaments of Truth which God hath drawn in Scripture or elſewhere, whence alone the Arguments for proof of the Truth are derived: So now the ſtate of the queſtion is reduced to a narrow compaſſe, and I ſhall lay it down in theſe Propoſitions.

1. Supreme and Infallible judge upon earth we know none, and I hope from what hath been ſaid and proved

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at large it appeares that there is none, at leaſt the Pope and Councell and Church of Rome is none.

2. An externall politicall judge in the Church we willingly acknowledge and reverently eſteeme, The true and rightfull Governors of the Church orderly Aſſembled, and proceeding regularly in Councels (whether leſſer or larger) are the externall judge, whoſe deciſions are to be highly valued, whoſe orders are not raſhly to be deſpiſed or contradicted, yet three Cautions wee muſt interpoſe. 1. That this Judge is not infallible, but ſubject to error. 2. That this Judge being ſubject to an higher Authority, and tied to an higher rule, if its deciſions or commands be manifeſtly repugnant to that ſuperior Authority and rule, they are not to be received and obeyed. 3. That this Judge is conſtituted by God in the Church, not for the command of mens conſciences, but for the regulation of their actions, and for the preſervation of the peace of the Church, which is not violated by mens inward and unknown ſentiments, but by their externall demeanor and ſenſible effects of them: And therefore this is abundantly ſufficient for the preſervation of order and peace in the Church.

3. Every mans own reaſon and conſcience is judge for himſelfe, and for the guidance of his own actions: State it in this manner, and I know no hurt at all in making reaſon a Judge: Chriſt himſelfe when he Preached in the World he propounds the Articles of Faith to the reaſons of his hearers, and calls upon every one of them to judge (ſo far as concerned his own apprehenſions or actions) *Luke* 12.57. *Yea, and why even of your ſelves judge you not what is right.* Chriſt no where commands his hearers blindly to ſubmit to the decrees of the preſent judge their Church, the high-Prieſt and Councill, but calls upon them to judge for themſelves, to beware of the Leaven, *i.e.* the falſe Doctrine of their Rulers, *Matth.* 16. 12.

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and(which is more)refers his own Doctrine to their ſearching, which is an act of reaſon, *Joh.*5.39. *Search the Scriptures?* But alas this reaſon is imperfect andcorrupt and dimſighted in matters of Faith, therefore ſomething farther is neceſſary. Therefore

Prop. 4. That reaſon may be a competent judge of matters of Faith: It is neceſſary that it be aſſiſted and elevated by the ſpirit of God, whereby of the rationall he is made a Spirituall man,and *eo nomine* a fit judge of ſuch affaires. 1 Cor. 2.15. *He that is Spirituall judgeth all things.* As that a man may exactly ſee thoſe Heavenly Bodies which are at a great diſtance from us, it is neceſſary to look upon them thorough a Glaſſe, without which a man could not diſcerne many of them: So are the aides of Gods ſpirit to help our purblind reaſon, which without theſe could not diſcerne things afarre off, according to 2 *Pet.*1.9.

Prop. 5. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament are the Infallible rule and ground and touchſtone of Faith, by which both Churches and all particular perſons are to be regulated in their faith and manners, from which all controverſies of Faith are to be decided and judged, to which all are perfectly ſubordinate, by which all the opinions of men and deciſions of Councels are to be examined, and they that ſwerve from and are oppoſite to this rule,are *ipſo facto* null and void, and ſo to be eſteemed by all Chriſtians. I rather call it a rule then a judge, becauſe there is an ἀκυρολογία in the word, the appellation of judge by common uſe being appropriated to perſons, but it is the voice and writing of our Soveraigne Lord and judg by which all inferior judges are to be guided in their decrees.

Propoſ. 6. Uniuerſall Tradition rightly underſtood (*viz.* the concurring teſtimony of all Churches, and ages, and perſons in their Writings left us) is of great uſe and force,

force, and is the Vehiculum or Channel by which that Scripture, (which alone is our rule) is conveyed to us. But here I must adde these two Cautions.

1. Tradition though necessary to convey the rule to us, yet is no part of the rule. I must here distinguish between *res tradita* the thing delivered, and *traditio* the Tradition or delivery of it: If Tradition be understood in the former sence (as the Papists understand it) for certaine unscripturall Doctrines delivered by Tradition, we know no such thing, and by comparing the boldnesse of their pretensions to such Traditions with the weaknesse of their proofes and evidences, we plainly discerne they can make out no such thing: But if Tradition be taken for the conveyance or delivery it selfe, or for the Testimony of the Church successively given to the Truths and Books of the Scripture, we confesse it is of great use and in some sort necessary, to bring the rule to us, yet (as I say) it is no part of the rule: As that bread which nourisheth me, it is necessary that it be brought to me in some Basket or other Vehiculum, yet it is the Bread alone, not the Basket which nourisheth me: The VVater of such a remote but excellent Spring which quencheth my thirst could not come to me, if there were not a channel to convey it, yet it is the VVater alone which refresheth me, not the channel. The decrees or Acts of King and Parliament are the onely rule by which our forreigne plantations are governed, and to which such as are judges there are tyed (yea so farre tyed that if those Judges should impose contrary commands, as for example; If they should command the people to rebell against the King, they are bound not onely to examine their commands, but to disobey them) But it is altogether necessary that there should be a ship wherein such Acts or decrees should be conveyed to them; yet it were a very absurd thing to say the Ship is a part of the rule, though the

Papists

Papists (whilest from the necessity of Tradition they infer that it is a part of the rule) do apparently runne into the same solecisme. In a word, Tradition was not appointed by Christ as a part of that ground upon which we were to build our rule, by which we were to try particular Doctrines and Articles of Faith, but was necessary, not *ex instituto Christi*, but *ex natura rei*, and from the condition of humane affaires, there being no other way (without a new revelation) possible or imaginable to convey the Gospell and Scriptures to those that were to live so many hundred years after the first publication of it: Tradition being to us, that which Eyes and Eares were to them that were Eye-witnesses of his convincing miracles, and Eare-witnesses of his irrefragable discourses, that is neither their Eyes and Eares were, nor to us Tradition is the Argument and ground of our Faith, but a necessary meane or instrument to convey those Arguments and grounds of Scripture which were convincing and satisfactory.

2. This Tradition is no Act of Authority, but onely of testimony, not at all peculiar to the Church or generall Councels, but common to all antient VVriters: Yea let it be observed as a very materiall consideration in this point, so far is the Capacity of a Church from being necessary to the validity of this Tradition and Testimony, concerning the great rule of our Faith the Holy Scriptures, that the Testimony and Tradition of such as neither are the Church nor any part of it, but enemies to it (I meane Jewes and Heathens) are in some respects more considerable, according to that known maxime — *Testimonium adversarii contra se est validissimum.* It being one of the best Arguments (and at this day so urged both by Protestants and Papists) for the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and particularly of the Gospell, that the truth of those Historicall relations of Christs miracles was acknowledged

knowledged by the moſt Learned Jewes and Heathens that lived in antient times: And by thoſe conſiderations we may diſcerne the vanity of that triviall calumny of the great differences among Proteſtants about the rule of Faith and judge of Controverſies, whereas by what hath been ſaid (which is no other then the common Doctrine of the Proteſtant Churches and Writers, however ſometimes they ſeem to differ in *modo explicandi*) it appeares how all theſe ſeverall things concurre like ſo many Stones fitly compacted together to make up the building of our Faith; which (that I may in few words preſent it to the Readers review) is this:

The Scripture is the Object, the onely rule and ſtandard of Faith, by which all controverſies of Faith are to be decided and judged, the *res creditæ*, and the *ratio credendi*. Tradition is the Vehicle to conveigh this rule to us and our times: Reaſon is the inſtrument by which I apprehend, or the eye by which I diſcerne or ſee this rule: The ſpirit of God is the Eye-ſalve that anoints mine Eye and inables it to ſee this rule: The Church is the interpreter (though not infallible and authentick) the witneſſe, the guardian of this rule, and the applier of the generall rules of Scripture to particular caſes and times and circumſtances.

And things being thus ſtated (which is really the ſence of Proteſtants in this great point, as it were eaſy to ſhew from the confeſſors of our Churches and the Treatiſes of our moſt and choiceſt Authors) is it not at all difficult to blow away with a breath thoſe pitifull cavils, whereby they indeavour to perplex the mind of ignorant or prejudiced perſons, leſt the light of the Goſpell ſhould ſhine into their minds. One thing is worth our Obſervation, That diverſe of the Popiſh arguments do wholly ariſe from, and depend upon, either ſome incommodious expreſſions of ſome Proteſtant Writers, or

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ſome falſe expoſition put upon them by the adverſaries; As for inſtance, when they argue againſt the Scripture from the nature of a Judge, that a Judge muſt heare parties, muſt not be mute, but paſſe ſentence, &c. All theſe and many ſuch cavillations are thus ſilenced by ſaying that which is true, that it is an ἀκυρολογία and figurative expreſſion when we call Scripture a Judge, in as much as it is the voice or writing of our Judge, and indeed it is a rule: So their Arguments againſt the judgment of reaſon, either have no weight in them at all, or elſe depend upon a ſcandalous and untrue ſuggeſtion, as if the Proteſtants made reaſon the Judge in a Socinian ſence: So their Arguments againſt the Spirits being judge do proceed I doubt from a willfull miſtake (for in their Learned Writers it cannot be ignorance) as if the Proteſtants ſubmitted Scripture and reaſon and all to the judgment of the ſpirit in themſelves in an Enthuſiaſtick notion, which is ſo farre from being true, that they try and judge of the ſpirit by the Word according to Apoſtolicall preſcription. This being premiſed, I come now to treat with my Captaine, and weigh his Arguments that have any colour or appearance of truth in them.

And firſt he argues againſt reaſons being the judge of Controverſies: Concerning which let me be bold to ſay thus much, That the Papiſts themſelves do make reaſon judge of Controverſies as farre as the Proteſtants do, though both the one and other tye up this judge to a rule. If it be ſaid the Proteſtants make the reaſon of every particular man judge, (which indeed they do, in the ſence forementioned and for their own actions) ſo do the Papiſts make the reaſon of the Pope or a Councell the judge, For when they ſay the Pope or Counſell is the Judge of Controverſies: I would know what it is in them, if not their reaſon which is the judge; as it is their reaſon which examineth and heareth and conſidereth,

ſo ſure, it is the ſame reaſon which concludeth and judgeth, ſo that the queſtion between the Papiſts and Proteſtants is not whether Reaſon be the judge, but whether the reaſon of particular perſons, or the reaſon of the Pope or Councell.

The Arguments which he urgeth againſt the judgment of reaſon are ſo irrationall that it is ſufficient confutation to mention them.

1. (Saith he) Reaſon muſt ſubmit to the Judge, E. it is not the Judge. *Anſw.* It is true, ſupreme Judge it is not, but ſubordinate and tied to rule: Proteſtants aſſert no more.

2. The Judge muſt be Infallible, but reaſon is Fallible, *Ergo:* *Anſw:* The Major is a pitifull *petitio principii*, They that help'd him to make his Book will tell him what it meanes.

3. If reaſon were Judge, a man might pleaſe God without Faith, for reaſon would teach us ſufficiently how to pleaſe God. *Anſw:* The ſame Argument will overthrow his Church: If the Church be the Judge, then a man may pleaſe God without faith, for the Church teacheth us ſufficiently how to pleaſe God.

4. If Reaſon be Judge we muſt not believe what we do not underſtand.

Anſw: *Non ſequitur*, For this Judge is tied up to a Law and rule which commands us to believe what we do not underſtand.

But I am ſick of ſuch woſull Arguments, though the poore Captaine hath no better, and therefore I will quit that work and come to that which is more materiall *viz.* To try whether he hath any better againſt the Scripture: And here alſo I ſhall do his cauſe that right as with him to take into conſideration what is ſaid by Mr *Creſſy* in his *Exomologeſis*, which I am the more willing to do, becauſe if the Popiſh cauſe have any ſtrength in it, and if the

Doctrine

Doctrine of the Scripture alone being Judge and rule of Controverſies be untrue and indefenſible (as they pretend it is) we may expect the demonſtration of it from a man of his wit and learning and experience in the Controverſy, as having thoroughly conſidered all pretenſions and arguments of both parties, and taken in the advice of the moſt famed Doctors of the Romiſh Church: But I muſt not diſſemble that I was wofully diſappointed in the peruſall of Mr *Creſſy*'s piece, and whereas I expected ſomething ſolid and ſubſtantiall, or at leaſt very plauſible, which I might have ſome ground in charity to believe might give at leaſt a colour for his change, I find little in him worthy of conſideration, but what hath allready received ſatisfactory Anſwers: Yet becauſe the cauſe affords no better Arguments, I ſhall briefly conſider what he and the Captaine and his aſſiſtants deliver in this matter.

That the Scripture is not the onely rule of Faith and Judge of Controverſies, is the Propoſition they attempt to prove, and their Arguments are thoſe which follow.

Arg. 1. Scripture cannot be this Judge and Rule, becauſe it did not anſwer its end, for they that own this Judge diſagree among themſelves, *Everard Epiſt.* p. 37. Scripture doth not reconcile them. Thus *Creſſy*, by this rule it is impoſſible that ever Controverſies ſhould be ended, *Sect.* 2. *chap.* 4. *n.* 1.

Anſw. Scripture might be (as really it was) deſigned inſtituted and ordained for the ruling of mens Faith and the judging and deciding Controverſies, though through the depravedneſſe of men, this end might not be obtained: If this Argument have any weight in it, I may upon the ſame ground argue thus: Preaching of the Goſpell was not inſtituted for the ſalvation of the World, becauſe it doth not anſwer its end, but proves to many a ſavour

of death: Or the Law of God was not instituted by God for a rule of life, because it doth not obtaine its end, and men will not be ruled by it: In a word let it be observed, If this Argument prove any thing, it proves what the very Papists deny, that the Scripture is not so much as a part of the rule, neither of Faith nor manners, for still according to the present Argument it doth not Answer its end, for there is no one controversy in Faith, which Scripture alone decides, so as to silence all differences, which is the thing pretended necessary to a Judge of Controversies. For the further discovery of the impertinency and vanity of this Argument, however it is their Goliah which they boast most of, I shall offer them this *Dilemma* relating to that power of ending all differences among Christians which they suppose was necessary for, and by Christ committed to the Judge of Controversies, Either (I say) that power is absolute, unconditionall and effectuall, and if so, there could be no Heresies, Schismes, or differences in the Christian World, which we see is most false; or it is a conditionall power sufficient of it self for the ending of differences, though frustrable and impedible in its effects by the ignorance or perverseness of men (which is the reall truth) And in this sense the Scripture may be judge, *i. e.* there is enough in it said and clearly delivered, by which all Controversies might be ended, if men would be humble, studious, and self-denying: and in the former sense the Church of Rome is no judge of Controversies. Peradventure it will be said that all men are bound to submit and hearken to all the decrees of the Church of Rome, and when they do so submit, it is an effectuall meane to end all differences: In the very same manner and upon farre better grounds I say of the Scripture, that all are bound to submit and hearken to all its Councels and decrees, and when they do so, it will effectually end all Controversies;

verſies: If it be further ſaid, that the Church hath a power of coercion to compel diſſenters to ſubmit: I Anſwer either that coercion they ſpeak of is ſpirituall by Church cenſures & excommunication, *&c.* or civill by corporall penalties death, *&c.* If they underſtand it of civill coercion, that is not at all neceſſary nor intrinſecall to an Eccleſiaſticall judge of Controverſies, otherwiſe the Apoſtles (who had not this civill power:) Nay Chriſt himſelfe (who denies that he was judge or ruler) ſhould not be ſuch a Judge, and the Church for the firſt 300 years had no judge of Controverſies: Nay, the Papiſts themſelves in pretence at leaſt abjudicate this from the Church, and referre it wholly to the Civill Power: If they ſpeak of a Spirituall coercion, then the Scripture hath ſuch a power of inflicting Spirituall penalties upon its violaters and contemners, ſuch as obduration, and ejection from the preſence of God, and ſuch excommunication as the other is but a ſhadow of it: And whether they ſpeak of one or other, the Proteſtant Judge of Controverſies is not deſtitute of either advantage: If it be remembred that the Proteſtants own an Eccleſiaſticall Politicall Judge, which Judge although their modeſty will not ſuffer them to pretend to Infallibility, and a power to oblige all people to receive all their decrees though anti-Scripturall, without enquiry; and though they ſay with the Apoſtle, they have their power for edification, not for deſtruction, 2 *Cor.* 13. 10 and they can do nothing againſt the Truth but for the Truth, and though it is their advice to their people, which was the counſell of the Apoſtle to his people. 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be followers of me even as I alſo am of Chriſt*: Yet they have a power to explaine and maintaine the Doctrines of the Scripture, and they acknowledge a power in the Magiſtrate by civill ſanctions and penalties to ſuppreſſe and reſtraine ſuch as ſhall corrupt the Truth and infect peoples ſoules with the poyſon of Hereticall

Doctrines. And this may abundantly ſerve for Anſwer to their *Achilles* or principall argument which makes ſuch a noiſe in the world.

Arg. 2. Scripture cannot be a perfect rule, becauſe ſome books of Scripture are loſt, and it is the whole Scripture which is this rule.

Anſ: 1. Then Tradition alſo cannot be a rule, for diverſe Traditions are loſt as *Criſſy* confeſſeth, *Sect.* 1. *ch.* 8. *n.* 5. and all the Papiſts acknowledg.

Anſw. 2. It doth not at all appeare that any one of thoſe Books are loſt which concerned controverſies of Faith, or the rule of Life; All which to this day hath been proved is this, That ſome Books Written by Holy men and Prophets are loſt: But it is a vaine imagination, without the ſhadow of a proofe, that all which was written by ſuch men was a part of Canonicall or Divine Scripture, for we read that the Holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt, which inſpired them not at all times, but onely when he pleaſed, there being this difference between the ſpirits inſpiration of Chriſt and all other Holy men, that it was in Chriſt without meaſure, and without difference of time, but in the Apoſtles it was a giſt, confined to ſuch ſeaſons and proportions as God ſaw fit for them. Is any man ſo abſurd as to think that every letter which a Prophet or Apoſtle might write about any private affaires was a part of the Sacred Scripture? Or if *Solomons* Herball were extant, muſt it needs be admitted into the Canon of the Sacred Scripture? Or how can they prove (and if they do not prove it, this Argument is impertinent) that the Hiſtories which *Joſhua*, or *Nathan*, or *Samuel*, or *Gad*, &c. might or did write concerning the Warres of the Lord, or the Civill tranſactions of the Kingdomes of *Iſrael* and *Judah* muſt needs be a part of the Canon? Or did the temporary tranſient and extraordinary inſpirations of the

the Holy-Goſt deprive them of their common gifts and faculties? And was the capacity of a Prophet inconſiſtent with that of an Hiſtorian? or becauſe *Balaam* was once inſpired, muſt we needs Canonize all that afterwards he ſpake, if it were extant? or becauſe *Hannah* was once inſpired, 1 *Sam.* 2. and *Simeon*, and *Elizabeth* Luk. 1. did ever any man, unleſſe in a dream, imagine that all their after Diſcourſes were Canonicall?

Anſw. 3. Although *fragmenta auri ſunt pretioſa* the leaſt ſhreds of Scripture are of ineſtimable value, yet we muſt diſtinguiſh between the eſſentiall and integrall parts of the rule of Faith, every part and parcell of it is a choice bleſſing for our *bene eſſe* and more abundant direction and conſolation, yet is it not an eſſentiall part of the rule of Faith, for the farre greateſt part of thoſe ſacred Books is ſpent in the explication of ſuch general lawes and directions as were of themſelves ſufficient *ſtrictè loquendo*, or the repetition of the ſame things which mans dulneſſe and backwardneſſe to ſuch things made highly expedient and beneficiall: The five Books of *Moſes* were ſufficient to Salvation before any of the other Books were indited, and the following Writings of the Prophets were but Comments upon them, which if by Gods providence they had been loſt, no doubt the firſt five Books would have been ſufficient for Salvation for that ſtate of the Church: So when St *Matthew* had VVritten his Goſpell wherein the Doctrine of the perſon and office and works of Chriſt (who is the marrow of both Teſtaments, and the ſole-ſufficient object of ſaving knowledge *Joh.* 17.3.) is clearly revealed and fully proved, I do aſſert (and let any of our Adverſaries prove the contrary if they can) that that had been ſufficient for our Salvation: And yet it muſt be acknowledged a wonderfull favour from God that he hath ſo plentifully provided for us, and ſo carefully watched by his Providence

dence for the preſervation of the ſeverall Books of Scripture, that all the wit and learning of Adverſaries can only furniſh them with two inſtances of Apoſtolicall VVritings which they ſuppoſe to be loſt *viz.* one Epiſtle from *Laodicea*, and another to the Corinthians.

Arg. 3. A rule muſt be plaine and cleare, but the Scriptures are darke and doubtfull, and that in things appertaining to Salvation, as appeares from 2 *Pet.* 3.16. --things hard to be underſtood which they that are unlearned and unſtable wreſt to their deſtruction: Now this could not bring deſtruction, if they were not hard in things appertaining to Salvation: And here the Captaine muſters up ſeverall neceſſary Doctrines which he ſuppoſeth not to be clearly laid down in Scripture.

Anſw. The Scripture is plaine and cleare in things neceſſary to Salvation, as hath been abundantly evinced by Proteſtants out of expreſſe Scriptures and conſent of Fathers: But that belongs to another point, and I do not love to mingle diſtinct queſtions together, therefore to them I ſhall referre the Reader, onely I ſhall take notice of ſuch aſſaults as he hath made upon this Doctrine.

For the Text 2 *Pet.* 3.16. I confeſſe I do not meet with any paſſage ſo plauſible as this in his whole Book: But the ſolution of the doubt is not difficult: If you conſider, 1. To whom theſe things are ſaid to be darke even to ignorant, unſtable, ungodly men: VVhen Proteſtants ſay Scripture is cleare, they do not meane it is ſo to thoſe that are blind, or to them that ſhut their Eyes, or have diſcoloured Eyes, (and ſuch are they of whom thoſe things are ſaid) but unto ſuch as are humble, and diligent in the uſe of means to find out the Truth; not onely ſome paſſages of St *Paul* but in generall *all* Divine and Spirituall Truths are darke to the naturall man (and ſuch there is no reaſon to doubt theſe were) as is poſitively

tively asserted by the Apostle *S. Paul*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishnesse unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*: and consequently, if the Popish argument from this place have any force in it, not onely some parts of Scripture will be dark, but not any part of it will be plaine, which the most impudent Papist durst never yet assert. 2. The wresting of the Scripture in any of its truths or doctrines is so great a sin, that it may well be called destructive, though the doctrine wrested be not simply necessary to salvation: as the disbelieſe and contempt of any Truth or assertion plainly delivered by God, is confessed to be damnable, though the matter of the assertion be meerly circumstantial, and not at all in it self necessary to salvation.

3. S. *Paul's* δυσνοητα, or difficult passages, might be wrested to destruction, although the matter of them was not necessary to be known, or understood in order to Salvation. As for instance: That passage of St. *Pauls*, *All things are lawful for me*, (scil. all indifferent things, for he there speaks of the use of meats, or observation of dayes,) This, I say is not a fundamental Truth, nor is the knowledg of it necessary to Salvation, yet when the Libertines do abuse this Scripture, to justify themselves in the practice of all wickednesse, doubtlesse they wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. Besides, the matter of a Text may be of lesser importance, and the knowledge thereof not necessary to Salvation, and the first and immediate mistake of it may be in it self inconsiderable, and yet that may usher in other, and those higher mistakes, (as we see error is fruitful, and grows worse and worse,) and at last end in destruction; as that Cloud, which at first was no bigger then a mans hand, did quickly overcast the whole Heavens. The doctriue of Predestination the Papists confesse is no fundamental, since their own

Doctors

Doctors are divided about it; yet if any man from St. *Paul's* assertions of the efficacy and immutability of Predestination, should infer the unnecessarinesse of Sanctification to Salvation, (as some have done) doubtlesse this man would wrest the Scriptures to his own destruction. But the Captain is not contented with a general imputation of darknesse to the Scripture, but pretends several Instances of things necessary to Salvation, which are not plain and clear in the Scriptures: his Instances are these. 1 The nature and number of the Sacraments. 2 The number of the Canonical Books, and that the Scriptures are the word of God. 3. The incorruption of the Scripture. 4. The understanding the true sence of Scripture, which is literal, which mystical. 5. The number of fundamental points. 6. The doctrine of the Trinity: and 7. other doctrines concerning the baptizing of Infants, and womens receiving the Eucharist, and the observation of the Lords day, and the doctrine which condemnes Rebaptization. All these (saith he) are necessary to Salvation, and yet Scripture is not plain and clear in them. So that here are two assertions, and both of them false in most of the Instances, and all are false in one of them. It pitties me to trifle away time in the particular answer of such impertinent allegations, did not the weaknesse of some in believing all that is boldly asserted, make it necessary.

For the 1. The Scripture is plain enough in describing the nature of those two Sacraments, which Christ hath instituted, as the Captain might easily have informed himself, if in stead of going to *Knot*, and *Fiat Lux* &c. he had looked into almost any of our Protestant Systems, or common places of Divinity, whither I refer the Reader, having somewhat else to do, then to transcribe common places: And for the other 5 Sacraments I cannot say they are delivered in Scripture *more clearly* then the others,

thers, but I may ſay, they are *leſſe darkly*, becauſe indeed not delivered there at all, being onely a fiction of their own, of which God may ſay, *They never came into my mind.*

For the 2. It is a crude and falſe aſſertion which the Captain layes down, That it is neceſſary to ſalvation to believe all the books of the holy Scriptures to be the word of God, and to believe nothing to be the word of God which is Apocryphal. If the latter part be true, woe to the Church of *Rome* that now is, which hath owned thoſe writings for the word of God in the Councel of *Trent*, which by the judgment of ſo many moſt learned Fathers, and grave Councels, and the Church of ſo many ſucceſſive ages have ever been held for Apocryphal, as no rational man can doubt, that ſhall take the pains to read either of thoſe excellent pieces, *Raynoldus de libris Apocryphis*, or Biſhop *Conſens* his Scholaſtical hiſtory of the Canon of the Scripture. And if the former part be true, then we muſt damne all thoſe Fathers, and Churches, who (as both Papiſts and Proteſtants acknowledge) did ſometimes doubt of ſome books now univerſally received: nay farther, we muſt damne all the former ages, and Churches, and innumerable holy and learned writers, and even many of the moſt famous Papiſts themſelves, who did all diſown and disbelieve ſome at leaſt of thoſe Books, which (if we take the judgment of the *Trent* Councel) are and were a part of the word of God. The truth is, (and ſo it is generally owned by Proteſtant writers) That the belief of thoſe Truths conteined in the Scriptures is neceſſary to Salvation, though happily a man through ignorance or error ſhould doubt about ſome one Book. It is neceſſary that I ſhould believe the hiſtory of Chriſts life and death, but it is not neceſſary to Salvation ſimply and abſolutely to believe that the Goſpel of St. *Mark* (for inſtance) was written by Divine inſpiration.

on. This may appear from hence, becauſe Faith is ſufficient for Salvation, and *faith comes by hearing*, Rom. 10. as well as by reading: now as Faith might be, and really was wrought by the hearing of the doctrine and hiſtory of Chriſt, when preached by ſuch Miniſters as were not divinely inſpired, ſo might it be wrought by the reading of ſuch things, when written by the very ſame perſons; and conſequently it was not, and is not neceſſary to the working of Faith, (and therefore to the procuring of Salvation,) to believe, That St. *Marks* Goſpel was written by Divine inſpiration. And yet I do not aſſert this, as if I thought that it were not a very great ſin, (eſpecially in and after ſo much light about it) to disbelieve any one book of the Scriptures, there being ſo many evident characters of a Divine inſpiration upon the particular books, beſides the general aſſertion 2 Tim. 3. 16. *All Scripture is given by divine inſpiration*, and other convincing places, but onely to ſhew, That (which is a certain and evident Truth) it is not ſimply and abſolutely, and *ex natura rei* neceſſary for every perſon to believe every particular Book to be the word of God, but a ſerious and practical beliefe of the Truths conteined in thoſe Books, may be ſufficient to Salvation, even where there is an ignorance (if not wilful and affected) of the Divine Authority of ſome book or books of Scripture.

3. For the Third thing, the incorruption of the Scripture, I Anſwer

1. The Scriptures incorruption in ſubſtantial and conſiderable points, beſides that it is confeſſed by the learned Papiſts (as I have ſhewed before,) doth ſufficiently appear from it ſelf, by the collation of one place of Scripture with another, as alſo by the collation of ſeveral copies. And one great argument of it may be fetched from (that which ſeems to twhart it,) viz. the various readings which learned men have obſerved out of diverſe copies,

copies, let any man look into them as he finds them collected in the late *Polyglotte* Bible, and his own eyes ſhall witneſſe, that howſoever the differences of Readings are numerous, yet they are not of any moment; and indeed the differences in leſſer matters are a conſiderable evidence of the Scriptures uncorruptedneſſe in greater, wherein the copies do wonderfully conſent.

2 If the Scripture not evidencing its own incorruption, hinder its being a rule, then neither can the Scripture be ſo much as a part of our Rule, (which yet is granted by the moſt inſolent of our Adverſaries) for ſo the argument will carry it, if there be any ſtrength in it, nor was the Decalogue a rule of life to the following generations of the Iſraelites, nor can the old and unrepealed Acts of Parliament be a Rule to England, nor yet can Tradition be a Rule to the Papiſts; for the Papiſts not onely confeſſe its inſufficiency to evince its own uncorruptedneſſe, but acknowledge its actual corruption in ſeveral points, (as hath been ſhewed before:) nor can the Decrees of Popes and Councels be a rule, which being writings, muſt needs be lyable to the ſame imperfections and corruptions, that the Scriptures becauſe writings are ſaid to be ſubject to: and conſequently there is no rule neither for Papiſts nor Proteſtants, but every one may do that which ſeems right in his own eyes.

4. He pretends it is neceſſary to Salvation to underſtand which is the true ſenſe of Scriptures, when it is to be taken literally, when myſtically, and this (ſaith he) cannot be underſtood from ſole Scripture.

Anſ. Here alſo both Propoſitions are remarkably falſe. 1. It is not neceſſary to Salvation to a Chriſtian to underſtand the true ſenſe of every Scripture: if it were, what ſhall become of thoſe Legions of poor deluded Papiſts, into whoſe devotion ignorance is ſo conſiderable an ingredient? who neither underſtand the ſenſe, nor are

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permitted to read the words of the Scripture. 2. The ſenſe of Scripture in fundamental points is clear and intelligible, and that from Scripture, which is its own beſt Interpreter. And if we conſult the beſt Expoſitors, either Popiſh or Proteſtant, we ſhall find, they never ſo well unfold Scipture riddles, (if I may ſo ſpeak) as when they plow with the Scriptures Heifer. Every puny knows the collation of parallel, or ſeemingly repugnant places; and the obſervation of the ſcope and cohærence, and the like, are the beſt Keyes to find out the true ſenſe of the Scripture, and ſufficient to diſcover it, unleſſe the readers ignorance or negligence, pride or prejudice ſtand in his way. I will take an inſtance from the Captain himſelf of thoſe Scriptures which confute the *Arrians:* Joh. 10. 30. *I and my father are one:* but (ſaith the Captain) the *Arrian* will ſay, this is meant of Oneneſſe in affection, as Joh. 17. 21. And here my Captain is gravelled, and halfe made an *Arrian*; and becauſe he could not anſwer the *Arrian*, he concludes again, no body elſe can: But wiſer men would have told him, That this *Arrian* gloſſe is confuted out of the Scriptures, both out of the preſent chapter, (the Captain and *Arrian* being more blind then the Jewes, who underſtood Chriſts meaning better, viz. That he made himſelf God, *v.* 33.) and from other places of Scriptures, where Chriſt is expreſly called *God*, Joh. 1. 1. *the true God*, 1 Joh. 5. 20. *and thought it no robbery to be equal with God.* Phil. 2. 6. And indeed the Councel of *Nice* (as I ſhewed in the foregoing diſcourſe) did confute the *Arrian* Hereſy out of the Scriptures, they ſaw no need of going further.

5 He alledgeth the number of fundamental points, which (ſaith he) the Scripture determines not.

Anſ. This is moſt falſe. The Scripture doth ſufficiently determine fundamental points: I muſt not here run into another controverſy concerning the number of fundamen-

damentals. This may ſuffice at preſent, That the Scripture doth not preſſe all Truths with equal vehemency; that there are ſome points, wherein the Scripture doth, though not approve of, yet diſpence with differing opinions in Chriſtians: ſuch as thoſe were concerning dayes, and meats, and ceremonies in Religion: and there are other points, which it urgeth upon us with higheſt penalties; ſuch as that in Joh.8.24. *If ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall dye in your ſins.* To me this is a rule: That to which God promiſeth or annexeth ſalvation, is ſurely ſufficient for ſalvation; I care not one ſtraw for all the Romane Thunder-claps of Damnation, where I have one promiſe from God for my ſalvation. I am aſſured by God that *to fear God, and keep his commandements, is the whole duty of man, Eccleſ.*12.13. *That he that feareth God, and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted of him, Act.* 10.35. *That this is life eternal, to know thee to be the onely true God and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent:* Joh. 17. 3. and conſequently if I know him, and believe in him, his perſon, and office, and work, I may humbly put in my claime for eternal life, and have not ſo much reaſon to fear their curſing of me, (knowing that the curſe cauſeleſſe ſhall not come) as they have to fear the curſe of God, and an addition to their plagues for adding to God's word. *Rev.* 22. 18. In a word, the fundamentals or ſubſtantials of Religion do apparently lie in two things, the Law, and the Goſpel: the Scripture tels me, *that love is the fulfilling of the law*, Rom.13. 10. *that he that loveth Chriſt ſhall be loved of his father*, Ioh.14.21. *that hereby we know that we are paſſed from death to life, becauſe we love the brethren*, 1 Joh 3.14. It tels me alſo, That faith in Chriſt is the fulfilling of the Goſpel: *ye believe in God, believe alſo in me*, Joh.14.1. *and theſe things are written, that ye might believe, that Jeſus is the Chriſt the ſon of God, and that believing ye might have life in his name.* Joh 20.31. Chriſt hath aſſured

ſured us, (it ſeems he ſhould have asked his Vicars leave for it,) *He that believeth on me hath everlaſting life. Joh.*3.36. For my part I am not afraid to venture my ſalvation upon this promiſe: and for Popiſh comminations and curſes, I ſhall only ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *Let them curſe, but bleſs thou*, Pſal. 109. 28.

By theſe things we ſee the Scripture ſufficiently informes us of fundamentals. To which I might adde the common ſenſe of Gods Church, and the learned Miniſters in all ages, it having been acknowledged by the moſt eminent Doctors, both antient and modern, both Popiſh and Proteſtant, (as may be ſeen at large in Dr. *Potters want of charity charged upon Romaniſts*, and Mr. *Chillingworths* Defence of it,) That the Creed, commonly called the Apoſtles Creed, doth contein in it a compleat body of the fundamentals of ſalvation for the *Credenda*, and all the Articles of the Creed are ſufficiently evidenced from the Scriptures, as I could with great facility demonſtrate, but I ſtudy brevity.

But you muſt know, the Church of *Rome* hath another notion of Fundamentals, a rare notion I tell you, for you ſhall not find the like either in Scripture, or any antient Author. They make the Churches definition the rule of Fundamentals: That is a Fundamental Truth, and *de fide*, which the Church determines and decrees, though never ſo inconſiderable, and that is no Fundamental, nor *de fide*, which the Church hath not determined, though it be never ſo material. Thus to faſt in Lent, on Fridaies, if the Church command it, is now become a Fundamental, and if any man obſtinately refuſe it, *God will aſſuredly condemne ſuch a perſon*, ſaith an Engliſh Apoſtate, *Creſſy ſect. 2.ch.*13.*n.*2. though he there confeſſeth it is but an action little more then circumſtantial: yet on the other ſide it is no Fundamental to hold, That all men (except Chriſt) are conceived in ſin, becauſe the Church (forſooth) hath

not

not determined the Queſtion of the Bleſſed Virgin. Thus with the Romaniſts it is a fundamental doctrine to believe that *Paul* left his Cloak at *Troas*, (namely if the Church injoyn you to believe it, for there is the knack, it is not Fundamental, becauſe St. *Paul* aſſerts it, 2 *Tim.* 4 13 but becauſe St. *Peters* ſucceſſor or the Church injoyns you to believe it:) but it is no Fundamental, that Chriſt is God, if the Church doth not oblige you to believe it. Did I ſay it was not a Fundamental? I do them wrong in not ſpeaking the whole truth; for ſo far are they from owning it for a Fundamental Article, that they will not allow it to be an article or object of our Faith, without ſuch confirmation and injunction from the Church, as I ſhewed in the beginning of the foregoing Diſcourſe. But this is ſo groſſe a cheat, and ſuch a groundleſs impoſture, wholly deſtitute of all appearance of proof, that it is a vanity to ſpend time in the confuting of it. If any Papiſt think otherwiſe, let him give us ſolid proofs, That the Pope or Councel have ſuch dominion over our Faith, That Fundamentals are all at their mercy; though methinks the very mention of ſuch a conceit is abundant confutation, nor can any thing be more abſurd, then to ſay, That it is no Fundamental to believe that God is, and *that he is a rewarder of them them that diligently ſeek him*, (unleſſe the Churches Authority command us to believe it,) and that it is a Fundamental to believe that (which ſo many of the Antients did not believe,) viz. the falſehood of the Millenary opinion, or of the admiſſion of departed Saints to the Beatifical Viſion before the day of Judgement, (becauſe theſe are determined by the Church:) And there is nothing which more eſſentially overthrowes the Popiſh conceit of Fundamentals, then the conſideration of the Pillar upon which they build it, which is the Churches Infallible authority, as the Anſwerer of Biſhop *Land* Diſcourſeth, whoſe great argument is this: *whoſoever*

ver refuſeth to believe any thing ſufficiently propounded to him for a truth revealed from God, commits a damnable ſin: but whoſoever refuſeth to believe any point ſufficiently propounded to him or defined by the Church as matter of faith, refuſeth to believe a thing ſufficiently propounded to him for a truth revealed from God: this is proved from hence, becauſe general Councels cannot erre. Where to ſay nothing of the Major, you ſee this man proves (and the Church of *Rome* hath no better proofs) *incertum per incertius*, their notion of Fundamentals from their opinion of Councels infallibility: and the infallibility of Councels having been abundantly evinced to be but a Chimærical Imagination, I muſt needs conclude, That the foundation being fallen, the ſuperſtructure needs no ſtrength of argument to pull it down. If any deſire to ſee this wild conceit baffled he may find it done in that excellent diſcourſe of Mr. *Stingfleets*, *part.* 1. *chap.* 2, 3, 4.

For the 6. particular, the doctrine of the Trinity: it is true, that is a real Fundamental; but to ſay, that is not clearly proved from the Scripture, and for one that pretends he was a Proteſtant to ſay thus, I confeſſe it is one of thoſe many arguments, which gives us too much occaſion to aſcribe the Captains change to any thing rather then to the convictions of his conſcience, or the evidence of his cauſe. Behold the harmony between Socinianiſme and Popery! Rather then not aſſert the Churches authority, theſe men will renounce the great principles of Chriſtianity, and put this great advantage into the Socinians hands, to confeſſe that they cannot be confuted by Scripture. But the learned Papiſts are of another mind in their lucid intervals, and ſome of them (as *Simglecius*) have ſufficiently overthrown the *Socinian* Hereſy from Scripture evidence: however I am ſure Proteſtants have abundantly evinced it. Let any man read but thoſe excellent diſcourſes of *Placæus* about the Præexiſtence of Chriſt

Christ before his birth of the Virgin, and his Divinity, and he will be of another mind. But this shews the Captain was prepared to receive any thing, that could so easily believe a proposition, which he could not but know from his own experience to be horribly false, unless he were shamefully ignorant.

7 For the remaining points, they split upon the same Rocks with the former, for there is none of them but is sufficiently evident from Scripture, as hath been fully proved by those who have treated of those matters: (but I must forbear digressions.) And besides, (in the sense he intends) he will find it an hard matter to prove their necessity to salvation: if he think otherwise, let him try his strength.

And this may satisfy the third argument concerning the Scriptures darkness in things said to be necessary to salvation,

A fourth argument urged against the Scriptures supremacy is, that we have not the Originals, but onely Copies and Translations, and these made by fallible men, and therefore it cannot be a certain rule to our Faith. This hath been answered in the former Discourse, it will suffice therefore briefly to suggest some few things.

1 This argument (if solid and weighty) will prove that no Copies nor Translations can be a Rule to us, that onely the Original Decalogue, which was written by Gods own finger, was a Rule to the Jews, and consequently, that Transcript of it which by Gods appointment the Prince had, and was obliged to read, was no rule to him: which how false it is, will appear from *Deut.* 17.18,19. —*When he sitteth upon the Throne,* —*he shall write him a Copy of this Law in a Book out of that which is before the Priests the Levites,* —*and he shall read therein,* —*that he may learn to keep all the words of this Law, and these Statutes to do them.* By which the Reader will quick-

ly discern what weight is in this part of the Discours: That a Copy cannot be a certain rule, for the Princes rule is but a Copy, and the Transcription of that not limited to an infallible hand. When *Moses* of old time was read in the Synagogues every Sabbath day, *Act.* 15.21. it is to be presumed, each of them had not the Original of God's writing yet was it never rejected from being a rule upon that account. What rare work would this Notion make in a Kingdom, if throughly prosecuted? Belike the Captaine doth not hold his Statute book a rule to him, because it is not the Original. And observe the horrible partiality of these men: The Decrees of the Pope or Councel, suppose of *Trent*, are a Rule and a certain one too to our English Papists, though they have nothing of them but a Copy and a Translation; but the Scripture cannot be a Rule, because it is onely a Copy and Translation. The law of God or of the Church is a rule to the hearers, when it is delivered onely by a Popish Priest (and he confessedly fallible) by word of mouth, and it ceaseth to be a rule, when it is delivered by writing by a fallible hand: yet surely the one is but a copy as well as the other, though made by diverse instruments.

2. The copies and Translations of Scripture are a sure and certain rule, because they do sufficiently evidence themselves to be the word of God, and the same for substance with the Originals. The incorruption of the Scriptures in substantial things is sufficiently evinced from the confession of its greatest Adversaries the Papists, from the consent of Copies taken by persons of several ages, and far distant places, and contrary principles, from the innumerable multitude of copies every where dispersed, and the constant jealousy and watchfulnesse of so many wise and zealous Christians, ready to observe the least considerable corruption, and give warning of it, and many other considerations. All those arguments which are pleaded

ded both by Papiſts and Proteſtants for the Divinity of the Scripture, they reach to copies and Tranſlations: In theſe, as well as in the Original is the majeſty of the Style, the ſublimity of the doctrines, the purity of the matter, the excellency of the deſign: To theſe as well as the Originals God hath given ſo many ſignal teſtimonies by the converſion of thouſands, by frequent and illuſtrious miracles, by the cooperation of his Spirit with them in the hearts of his people, and many other arguments, which (when a Papiſt is in a good mood, and diſputing with a Pagan) muſt paſſe for undeniable demonſtrations of the truth of Chriſtianity and the Divinity of the Scriptures. And for the differences in Tranſlations, (either noted by the Papiſts, or confeſſed by any of the Proteſtants,) which the Captain makes a great Flouriſh with, and other Papiſts make ſuch triumphs at, they are ſo petite and trivial, and ſo little concerning the ſubſtance and foundation of Religion or the Scriptures, that to me it affords an unqueſtionable evidence, That our Tranſlations are unblameable in fundamental places, becauſe all their great wits and learned Doctors to this day could not diſcover any ſuch miſtakes, though they have made it their buſineſſe to find them out. But I ſhall ſay no more to this argument in this place, having in the former part of the Treatiſe ſpoken to it.

A fifth argument is taken from the ſeeming contradictions which are in Scripture, not reſolveable by the Scripture. Hence (ſaith the Captain) Reaſon conceiveth her ſelf to have this infallible demonſtration, viz. no one who ſpeaketh two things, the one contrary to the other, is infallible in ſpeaking: but the Scripture ſo ſpeaketh, therefore ſaith Reaſon the Scripture is not infallible in ſpeaking. Nay (he might and ſhould have ſaid) the Scripture is not credible in ſpeaking: and therefore ſay I, by the vertue of this argument the Captain muſt either ac-

knowledge himself an unreasonable man, or an Atheist: I tell you it was good hap, That in stead of the Catholick Gentleman he did not meet with an Atheist, for the arguments which convinced him are indifferently calculated for either Meridian. But for all those seeming contradictions, the short Answer is this.

1. That there are no such places, but are capable of convenient reconciliations, as hath been already made good by several learned men both Papists and Protestants, who have professedly treated of those matters, and discovered the vanity of this objection. And if it were granted, That there are some places which men have not yet hit upon the right way of reconciling them, that is no evidence of the impossibility of it, since we can give instances in others, which in former times were thought as insoluble, as any now are, which the learning and diligence of after ages hath fully cleared from all semblance of contradiction.

2. Those seeming contradictions, are either reconcileable out of Scripture, or else are but historical difficulties, not at all necessary to salvation. The Captain should do well to put the parts of his discourse together, and see how they agree, because he will not, I will do it for him. The Proposition which Protestants assert, and he attempts to disprove is, That the Scripture is a perfect Rule in things necessary to salvation. This he disproves by instancing in some insoluble difficulties in matters unnecessary to salvation. But we must pardon him, it is *vitium causæ*, the cause affordes no better arguments.

A sixth argument is this. Scripture is no sufficient rule, because it is lyable to diverse and contrary expositions. An invincible argument, by which a man may dispute all Rules out of the world! *Probatur.* The Decalogue is no rule of life or manners, for the Pharisees understood it one way, Christ another, *Mat.* 5. The Statutes of the Kingdome are

are no rule, for learned Lawyers differ in their expoſitions. The Decrees of Popes and Councels are no rule, becauſe lyable to diverſe and contrary expoſitions, ſo far, that *Gratian* the compiler of their Canon Law hath one entire Title *De Concordantia, Diſcordantium Canonum*, i. e. concerning the reconciling of diſagreeing Canons: And there is this remarkable difference between the condition of the Romiſh and our affairs: our differences are in the expoſition and accommodation of the rule, but Popiſh differences are in the Text and rule it ſelf, ſince there are amongſt them not onely diverſe and contrary expoſitions of the ſame Canon, (which yet is ſufficient to take off all their glorying over us, and to bring them to our levell) but indeed there are contrary Texts, the decrees and ſentences of one Pope directly contrary to another, and one Councel to another. Pope *Stephen* nulls the decrees of *Formoſus*, the three next Popes null the decrees of *Stephen*, and re-eſtabliſh thoſe of *Formoſus*. *Sergius* the third comes after, and again nulls *Formoſus* his decrees. But I will tell you of a greater matter, even no leſſe then the Authentical Tranſlation of the Bible: *Sixtus* the 5th. ſets forth one Bible *An.* 1590, not raſhly, but deliberately, with the advice of his Cardinals, the aſſiſtance of the moſt learned men of all the Chriſtian world, (they are his own words,) corrects the errors of the Preſs with his own hand, impoſeth this upon the whole Church. Within 3 years comes *Clemens* the 8. and he puts forth another Edition, not onely diverſe, but in ſeveral paſſages directly contrary to it, (for which I refer the reader either to thoſe two Bibles themſelves, or to Dr. *James* his *Bellum Papale*, and the Defence of it, where he ſhall find above a thouſand differences between them,) yet *Clemens* ſuppreſſeth all other Tranſlations, and enjoynes this for the onely Authentick Tranſlation, and ſo it is held to this day. The like I might ſhew of Councels, as it were

easy to furnish the Reader with many instances not of the seeming but real contradictions of Popes and Councels among themselves, and yet (forsooth) the appearance of a contradiction must exauctorate the Scriptures, when real contradictions shall not prejudice the Authority of Pope and Councel; so true it is, That some may better steal a horse then others look over the hedge.

The seventh assault which the Captain makes is this. If the Scripture be our sole rule and Judge, then it was so in the Apostles dayes, and if so, the Authority of the Apostles ceased when they had done writing.

I Answer 1. The Consequence may very well be denied from the Apostles times to ours. The argument is this: Scriptures were not the onely rule, when there were several governours of the Church acknowledged on all hands to be infallible both singly and joyntly: *Ergo* it is not the onely rule now, when there is no person nor persons in the Church, but who is proved to be fallible. For this is the case at this day, unlesse the Captain and Mr. *Cressy* and the rest will change their notes, and in stead of the Pope and Councel combined, say that the Pope alone is infallible, wherein I desire to understand their minds. 2. The other Consequence hath not a Dram more of Truth in it: for if the Scripture were the sole rule, yet did not the Apostolical Authority cease. It is no diminution to their Authority to say, they had not a power superior to the Scripture or the word of God, i. e. That the Servant was not above his Master; the Apostles never pretended to such a power, but rather carried themselves in all things as became those who professed their subjection to the word of their God and Lord. Observe the manner of their proceeding in that great Councel, *Act.* 15. still you shall find the Scripture is the rule, by which they guide the whole debate, and from which they draw their conclusion, as none that read that chapter can deny. You

may

may obſerve that an Apoſtle (and he too of ſo great Authority that he durſt reprove St *Peter* to his face *Gal.*2.) makes no ſcruple of circumſcribing his own Authority within the limits of Gods Word, and he repeats it *in rei memoriam*, *Though we or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Goſpell unto you then that which we have Preached unto you, let him be accurſed*, Gal.1.8. I know it is ſaid by Mr *White* in his Apology for Tradition, that this place makes for Tradition rather then for Scripture, and for what the Apoſtles delivered by word of mouth, not what they left in Writing: To which the reply is moſt eaſy, that ſince the Doctrine delivered by the Apoſtles, either by word or Writing is and muſt be confeſſed to be of equall Avthority (the Councell of *Trent* goes no higher while they aſſert that Scripture and Tradition are to be received *pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia*, with equall piety and reverence) it conſequently followes, that he who renounceth all pretenſions of Authority Superior, or not ſubordinate to the one, cannot be ſaid with any colour of ſence to challenge a Supremacy over the other: The Apoſtles had not ſo learned Chriſt as they who arrogate the name of their Succeſſors have: The power they claimed was not Autocratoricall and deſpoticall, having dominion over the peoples Faith, and being Lords over Gods Heritage, but onely Miniſteriall, not for deſtruction, but for edification, not coordinate, but ſubject unto their Maſter and his Word.

The laſt reaſon he urgeth is, that this opinion of ſole Scripture makes every man Judge who take upon them to read and underſtand the Scripture.

*Anſw.*1. If it be meant a private Judge, ſo farre as it concernes his own actions; It is true, and that Judgment (as I have ſhewed) the Scripture allowes and enjoynes to private Chriſtians, and informes us of the ſad condition of thoſe that neglecting their own judgment, give up themſelves

themselves to a blind obedience to their rulers (an errour common to the Jewes of old and the Papists now) assuring us this is no excuse nor security to them, but *if the blind lead the blind both will fall into the Ditch*, Matth. 15. 14.

2. The Papists themselves however they renounce this principle of every mans being Judge in words and shew, yet they receive it in truth and practise upon it, and whatever noise they make of Fathers and Councels and the Pope and Church, yet in truth they make particular men the Judges for their own actions: For instance if we examine the grounds and manner of the Conversion (as they miscall it) of any man to the Romish Religion, (take *Cressy* and the Captaine for instances) we shall find the Papists that dealt with them, made them Judges: And when the Captain yields to that great Argument, *viz.* That if he did not turne Catholick he had no infallible assurance that Christian Religion was true, was not he himselfe Judge of the validity of this Argument? And when *Cressy* or others are perverted by that great Title of the Churches Authority to which they think all should be subject, what do they but make themselves Judges of this question upon which all depends, whether the Churches Authority be a sufficient and safe foundation for a mans faith to rest upon? So if I come to any Papist who is capable of Discourse, I would aske him whether he continues in the Popish communion and believe with reason or without it? If he say, without reason, I shall forbear discoursing with brute creatures: If with reason, I demand what it is; and here he will enter into a large harangue, concerning the necessity of a living and infallible judge for the ending of Controversies, and that the Pope or Councell is this Judge: In this case I say, the Romanist makes himself the Judge of the first and principall question, upon which all the rest depend, *viz.* whether

whether such a Judge be necessary, and whether the Pope or Councell be this Judge: And certainly as St *Paul* argues 1 *Cor.* 6. They that are fit to judge the greater and weightier causes cannot be unfit to judge the smaller matters.

Thus I have gone over all the Arguments or appearances of reason which the Captaine or others for him have collected, and what Mr *Cressy* hath pleaded for any of them: I shall in the next place proceed to answer what farther Arguments I meet with either in Mr *Cressy*, or in that *famous (or rather infamous) piece* called *Rushworths* Dialogues, or in Mr *Whites* Apology for Tradition: For doubtlesse *si Pergama dextrâ Defendi possent, dextrâ hac defensa fuissent*: And if men of their parts and learning and study in the Controversy can say nothing to purpose against the Scriptures being a perfect rule, I shall with greater security acquiesce in the Truth of the Protestant Doctrine.

Another Argument therefore against the Scriptures is taken from the occasion of Writing the Books of the New-Testament of which *Cressy* Treats, *Sect. 2. chap. 10.* And it is observable that his Argument (however it regularly ought to reach the whole Scripture, yet) is onely (upon the matter) levied against the Epistles in the New-Testament, which (saith he) *were never intended to be Written as Institutions or Catechismes containing an Abridgment of the whole Body of Christian Faith for the whole Church, for they were Written onely to particular Persons or Congregations (without order to communicate them to the whole Church) and they were written meerly occasionally, because of some false Doctrines which if those Hereticks had not chanced to have broached, they had never been Written: And therefore surely are very improper for a rule of Faith (which must be so true and cleare and evident that there can be no rationall possibility of contradiction*

or

or diverſity of opinion) and for a man to venture his Soule upon. This is the ſumme of that Diſcourſe (excepting what he ſaith of the obſcurity of the Scriptures which I have conſidered before.)

For Anſwer, 1. Since Mr *Creſſy* requires it in a rule of Faith that it be ſo true and cleare and ſo evident, that there can be no rationall poſſibility of contradiction or diverſity of opinion, let him, or rather any other diſintereſſed or unprejudiced perſon ſeriouſly conſider, what hath been diſcourſed in the former Treatiſe, and Anſwer it to his own conſcience as he will give his account to God another day, whether the Popiſh rule of Faith be ſo true and cleare and evident, *&c.* as is pretended to be neceſſary, or rather, whether it be not ſo dark and doubtfull, that it is not onely rejected by Proteſtants upon ſolid and cogent grounds, but alſo diſputed and denied by diverſe of their own great Doctors: The queſtion under favour is not this, whether our rule be ſo cleare as to admit of no poſſibility of contradiction, (for who can dream of this that ever heard or read of the Academicks whoſe great principle was to contradict every thing and be confident of nothing?) but whether the Popiſh rule or ours be better, whether is more true, clear, and evident? And this one would think ſhould not be very difficult to determine: And whether the Proteſtant rule be ſo evident that it may ſatisfy the Conſcience and Reaſon and prudence of any modeſt, humble, and diligent enquirer, though it may not ſilence the clamours of every bold caviller, ſince there have been (and probably yet are) in the VVorld men ſo abſurdly ſceptical, that they have cavilled againſt the certainty of this Propoſition, that two and three make five.

2. The occaſionality and particularity of thoſe Writings is no impediment to their being a rule, (though this is a notion the Popiſh Writers oft mention and vehemently

mently urge upon the ſimpler ſort of men) It neither hinders their being a rule, nor their being a perfect rule: 1. Not the former, the Papiſts themſelves being Judges, for they acknowledge it to be *regula partialis* a part of the rule (I tell you Chriſt is exceedingly beholden to them that will acknowledge thus much and allow him any ſhare in the rule of his Church.) The Councell of *Trent* in its Decree concerning the Canonicall Scriptures, notwithſtanding this objection aſcribes this to the Scriptures no leſſe then to Traditions, *That both of them together are the Canon or rule of Faith and manners*, and to both *they allow equall Piety and reverence as I ſaid before.* Will any man ſay the law concerning Inheritances delivered *Num.* 27. was no Law or rule to the Iſraelites, becauſe it was delivered upon the extraordinary occaſion of *Zelophehads* daughters Petition? Or that the Law againſt the Prieſts drinking of Wine, when he was to go into the Tabernacle *Levit.* 10. 9. was no rule to the Prieſts, becauſe delivered peradventure upon the occaſion of ſome intemperance of *Nadab* and *Abihu?* 2. Nor doth this at all hinder the Scriptures being a perfect rule, partly becauſe this Objection concernes onely one part of the New-Teſtament *viz.* the Apoſtolicall Epiſtles: But for the Goſpels which of themſelves are a ſufficient rule (though the addition of the other is an abundant conſolation and a rich mercy:) Mr *Creſſy* confeſſeth *they were Written upon no ſpeciall occaſion, but for the common benefit of all ſucceeding Chriſtians as an Hiſtory of his Life and Death, and a ſumme of the principall points of his Doctrine,* (They are the Authors words, and we need no more to juſtify the Scriptures ſufficiency) and partly becauſe the occaſions, however caſuall to men, yet were foreſeen and foreordained by God to be ſuch as would recurre in all following Ages, and partly becauſe the Apoſtle extends his thoughts and inſtructions beyond

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the present occasion upon which, or particular person, or persons to which he Writes even to following Ages, and consequently intended them for rules and directions not onely to them, but to others, yea to all succeeding Christians. What else meanes St *Paul* in charging *Timothy* to keep the command there mentioned — *untill the appearing of Christ*, 1 Tim.6.14. which St *Paul* knew was at a great distance, 2 *Thes.* 2.1. if he did not include his Successors? The Books of the Old Testament, at least diverse of them were written upon speciall occasion, and yet St *Paul* hath given it under his hand, *That whatsoever things were Written afore time were Written for our learning*, Rom.15.4. and that all those Scriptures *are profitable* (to us) *for Doctrine, reproofe*, &c. 2 Tim.3.16. An irrefragable Argument that what was Written upon a speciall occasion may be a standing rule. And the constant universall practise of all the Antient Fathers and Counsels confirming Truths or Duties, and reproving sins or errors in after Ages from the Testimonies of the Apostolicall Epistles, doth unquestionably evince that they judged them however directed to particular persons or Churches, yet indeed designed for a rule of the Church in all following Generations.

That particular occasions have given the rise to such generall rules and lawes as have been of perpetuall force and use, no man that knowes any thing can be ignorant: And that really this was the case, and that the Principles, Doctrines, and Instructions which are laid down by the Apostles in their Epistolary Writings, how particular soever the occasion might be that drew them forth, are in their own nature and quality indifferently calculated for, and equally fit to be a guide to other persons or Churches, needs no proofe, but the reading of them, and a reflection upon the daily practise of all Preachers as well Popish as Protestant which from time to time deduce

such

ſuch documents from them as are ſingularly uſefull in whatſoever age or place they live in.

And this may ſerve Mr *Creſſy*'s turne, for I meet with nothing elſe conſiderable to this point in his Book. In the next place I ſhall conſider what Mr *Ruſhworth* ſaith (who in the opinion of the Romaniſts is πόλλων ἀντάξιος ἄλλων) in his famed Dialogues: His Arguments againſt the Scriptures being Judge of Controverſies are two: The firſt is (that which hath been allready handled) from the errors and corruptions which muſt needs be in our Bible, by Copiſts and Tranſlators: And here he ſet his wit upon the rack to deviſe whatever could be ſaid to blaſt the credit and the Authority of the Scripture: Here he tels us of the many hazards, doubts, and miſtakes, from multitude of Copies, depravations of Hereticks, the Jewes at *Tiberias* and Greeks elſewhere, miſtakes of the negligent or ignorant Tranſcriber, multiplicity of Tranſlations, equivocation of words which are uſed in ſeveral ſenſes according to the variety of times, places, and perſons, the ceaſing of theſe Tongues in which Scripture was Written, and the quality of the Hebrew and Greek Tongues: He computes how many errors probably might be in the Copies of the Bible, we may well allow (ſaith he) 336 errors in one Copy, which admitted, you will find the number of errors in all the Copies made ſince the Apoſtles time fifteen or ſixteen times as many as there are words in the Bible, and ſo by this account, it would be 15 or 16 to one of any particular place, that it were not the true Text, (Theſe are his words *Dialog.* 2. *Sect.* 5.)

VVhen I read theſe and other things of the ſame tendency, I began to reaſon with my ſelfe: Are theſe the Diſcourſes of *William Ruſhworth* a Romiſh Prieſt? Are theſe the Arguments which muſt make men Chriſtians or (which in their ſence is all one) Roman Catholicks?

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Is this the man *that affected the rigour of Mathematicall discourse even in his Controversies, as we may perceive by this worke?* (for so Mr *White* is pleased to tell us?) Is this the Book that so learned, so ingenious a man as Mr *White* must commend to the VVorld, as *that which was very satisfactory to diverse judicious persons*: Surely it is a mistake these are not *Rushworths*, but *Vaninus* his Dialogues, or it is a newfound remnant of *Julian* the Apostate, which some unlucky Heretick hath set out under the name of a Romish Priest.

May I be so bold as to aske our Holy Mother the Church of Rome *Num haec est tunica filii?* Is this thy sonnes voice? No sure, It is some Priest of *Apollo*, bidding defiance to the Christian cause, and striving to render the Holy Scriptures contemptible and ridiculous. But you see what desperate men will do, in a desperate cause, rather then not maintaine the Papall Authority, they will subvert the very foundations of Christianity: The Jesuites tell us that in order to the comming of Antichrist, *Rome* shall turne Pagan; I am perfectly of their mind, and I think the turne is halfe wrought allready: *Ecce signum*! for none short of a Pagan could talke at this rate: The insolency of the Discourse, and confidence of the Disputer, and the applaus of his party makes it necessary that I should say something farther by way of Answer.

The first Answer (which alone may silence this impudent Objection) is this: Either this Argument proves nothing against us, or it proves more then the Papists, at best such of them as are not quite out of their wits and consciences too would have it; let us reflect a little upon the premises and then forecast the Conclusion. Take all his discourse for granted, that by reason of the many mistakes, corruptions, doubts, difficulties, there is nothing but incertitude, that it is fifteen to one of any particular place,

place, that it is not the true Text, that it *is as ridiculous to seek the decision of Controversies out of the Bible, as to cut with a Beetle or to knock with a straw*: These are the Authors words *Dialog. 2. Sect. 2.* Go, say these are faint-hearted fellowes if you can: Give me those honest soules that tell us plainly what they think of the Scriptures, and how little they value them. It were an hard case if all the the Churches Adversaries were crafty companions: Now (say I) if these things be true then certainly it was not without cause, that the Papist forementioned said, that without the Churches Authority the Scriptures were of no more value then *Æsops* Fables. Their Father *Costerus* had good reason to say it was a Sheath that would admit any Sword, and *Pamelius* did rightly call it a Nose of Wax. If this were true, we might throw all our Bibles into the Fire, for Controversies cannot be decided thence, nor errors detected, nor truth evinced, (there's nothing there but uncertainty and darkness) and consequently our sins cannot be reproved, nor duties pressed from the Scripture for the same reason, unless these men will say (who we see will not stick at small matters) that the Copists or Translators errors did happily hit onely upon such places as concercerned Controversies (that the Church alone might rule there) not at all on such as concerne duties and sinnes: But if this be true, whence come those high Characters and ample Testimonies which the most learned Papists and their Councels have given to the Scripture, that they acknowledge the Scriptures or Bible (and they spake of that which we have) to be the word of God, as much to be reverenced as Tradition it selfe: How came *Bellarmine* to say of those Books of the Prophets and Apostles (which we have) *Nihil notius, nihil certius*, &c. *i.e.* nothing is more evident, nothing more certain then that they are the Word of God, and none but a fool can denie

them credit: *de verbo Dei, lib.* 1. *c.* 2. Whence is it that the Papists accuse the Protestants of slander, for saying they exauctorate the Scripture? How is it that they all pretend the Church may not contradict those very Scriptures which we have? In my opinion the Church of Rome was wofully overseen in disputing with the Protestants out of the Scripture, or troubling themselves to answer the Scriptures which Protestants brought, for Mr *Rushworth* hath furnished them with one Answer which will serve for an universall Plaister, therefore I would advise them thus to Answer once for all, when a Protestant argues against merit from that Text, *When you have done all that you can say you are unprofitable servants*, Luk. 17. 10. Let them say it was the error of the Copist, & should have been *profitable servants*: So when it is made a Character of the Apostacy of the latter times *forbidding to marry*, 1 Tim. 4. 3. It is but saying, it was an error of the Copist that put *forbidding* instead of *commanding*, (a familiar mistake at Rome) and then I think the Heretick is paid home: And so when Christ bids the people *Search the Scriptures*, say the Copist left out the word *not*, it should have been *Search not*, for so Tradition assures us: And so in a thousand other cases, I need no more then give the hint, A word is enough to the wise, as doubtlesse they at Rome are in their generation: In short, what do these men and such Arguments tend to but debauch the consciences of men, and depreciate the Scriptures, that if men have not so much grace as to abhorre such heathenish discourses, it is enough to make the Scripture as insignificant a VVriting as the most contemptible Pamphlet that ever the VVorld was pester'd with.

I easily apprehend there is one subterfuge, that the Adversaries of the Holy Scriptures will think to make an escape at: They will say all this is true, there neither is

nor

nor would be any thing at all certaine, or credible, or clear in the Scripture, and the Sacred VVritings we now have, but for the Infallibility of the Church, which from Infallible Tradition receives them and delivers them to us: But I Answer, 1. Woe to us Christians if all the validity of the Scripture depended upon the Infallibility of the Pope or a Councell. Is not this a rare piece of intelligence for Heathens and Atheists and scoffers at the Scripture? Are not these men worthy pillars of the Christian cause? 2. Tradition is not at all concerned in the present dispute nor Infallibility neither: For suppose the utmost of what can be or is said by the Romanists in this matter *viz.* that by Tradition we are Infallibly assured that the Scriptures are the VVord of God, and that the severall Books reputed Canonicall by them are indeed Canonicall, suppose I say we should take all this for granted, what is this to our businesse? Tradition (I hope) doth not Infallibly assure them that the Copists committed no errors in Transcribing nor the Translators in Translating. Tradition did not infallibly assure *Sixtus* 5th, that his Translation was right, for it assured his Successor *Clement* 8, that it was corrupt in above a thousand places: And when those Popes put forth their Translations it sufficiently appeares and they confesse it, they were not guided by inspiration, but proceeded in all things *more humano*; by collation of Copies, advice of learned men, as I mentioned before out of the Popes own words: And consequently if all Copies be so corrupt that we can have no certainty from them, no more could the Pope and his consultors have from those Copies they used, and therefore are lyable to the same uncertainties.

2. However Mr *Rushworth* pleaseth himselfe in this Argument as if it were unanswerable, and Protestants were mad that did not yield to it; there is one plaine

evidence able to assure any rationall man that there is no weight and force in it, because, although these things have been formerly and frequently objected against the Scripture (for Mr *Rushworth* was not the first Antiscriptnrist) yet diverse of the most learned, and discreet, and resolved Doctors of the Romish Church (who doubtlesse were too wise to let slip any reall advantage, and knew very well how much their cause needed it) do utterly reject and deny it, and together with us do assert the uncorruptednesse of the Books of Scripture now extant among us, as I before proved out of their own words.

3. Here is not any one convincing reason to perswade us of the corruption of the Scripture in substantiall things: All that Mr *Rushworth* offers in liew of those solid Arguments to disprove the Authority and purity of our Bible is a collection of probabilities (which witty men can easily multiply upon all occasions) to shew that errours have been frequently committed in Copies and Translations (which no man denies:) But alas how farre short do they fall in proofe, if they come to be scanned by any indifferent person: That which seemes to threaten most is the corruption of Hereticks, and we are told of the Jewes at *Tiberias* who pointed the Bible, when enemies to Christ, and thereby had opportunity to change the whole Text, as also of the Greek Hereticks: I am very willing the cause should be decided by this one point: For (as it is well argued by the Assertors of the Integrity of the Hebrew Text, to whom I refer the Reader, such as *Buxtorf* and *Glassius* and many others) if those Jewes have corrupted the Hebrew Bible malitiously to weaken the Christian cause, certainly they have done it in those places which are of greatest importance to evince Christianity: But this it is notoriously known they have not done, since most of the convincing proofs

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of Christs being the true Messiah are taken out of that very Bible which came out of their hands: And for the Greek and other Hereticks, it is very true that some of them did attempt the corruption of some few Texts of Scripture, but the very attempt made such a noise in the Christian World, and the whole Church took such an alarme at it, that it was presently discover'd and abhorr'd, and they severely censured for it, and even Papists confesse the Doctours of the Church were so vigilant, that there could not be any wilfull and materiall depravation of the Greek Testament, and the like may be said for the neglects or oversights of Copists. The Christians of former Ages had such an high opinion of the Scriptures necessity and transcendent excellency, that they kept it with all possible care, such exact acquaintance and familiar knowledge of the Scripture, that they could not but discover the least considerable error, such conscientious strictnesse, that they abhorred the least depravation, and such jealousy and watchfulnesse to observe and secure that inestimable treasure, that it cannot with any probability be imagined that substantiall corruptions should come into the Texts, and much lesse can the contrary position be taken for a demonstration.

4. As there is no cogent reason to argue the Bibles corruption, so there are sufficient evidences of its incorruption: Some I have now mentioned, to which may be added the generall inconsiderableness of those various lections (which Popish Writers triumph so much in) the sameness for substance in all the citations of Scripture in Authors of diverse Ages, and distant places and several languages, the acknowledged uncorruptedness of severall other Authors (as to materiall points notwithstanding all the different readings) which yet were not read with that diligence and observation, nor received with

that veneration, nor kept with that Religion, nor watched with that jealouſy, nor were the corruptours of them terrified with ſuch threatnings, nor mens own intereſts ſo deeply concerned in the conſervation of their purity, and conſequently were farre more liable to errors or violations then the Scripture: To all which may be added that (which alone is ſufficient) even the providence and goodneſſe of God, which as it mercifully gave theſe excellent Writings for mans conduct to eternall bliſſe, ſo it gives us juſt ground for a comfortable and confident expectation that it would preſerve them to our uſe, and not ſuffer theſe (Holy VVritings) to ſee corruption: This is ſo materiall a conſideration even in the judgment of our Adverſaries, that it is their principall Argument, and urged by them with greateſt vehemency and plauſibility, for the Churches Authority and Infallibility, becauſe (as they pretend) it doth not conſiſt with the providence and goodneſſe of God to leave his Church without an Infallible guide; ſo that both Papiſts and Proteſtants own the ſolidity of the principle, and differ onely in the application of it, whileſt they urge it for the Infallibility of the Pope and Councell (which as you have ſeen their own Authors are not ſatisfied in) and we urge it for the Infallibility and incorruptibility of the Scriptures, (which all Proteſtants and diverſe Papiſts aſſert:)

Thus I hope I have fully ſatisfied that firſt Argument.

The other Argument which Mr *Ruſhworth* ſuggeſts is taken from the nature of the Books of Scripture: *If a law were to be given in Writing it muſt be thus; Firſt the common things muſt be commanded, then by degrees they muſt deſcend to particulars, ſtill obſerving that ſeverall matters ſhould be under ſeverall Chapters or diviſions, and not one piece here, another there, and things muſt be plaine and diſtinct: From which it is evident enough that the*

Scripture

Scripture was never intended for a Law or Judge of Controverſies, becauſe the Book is ſo large, and ſo many things mingled unappertaining to the ſubſtance of our beliefe, as Hiſtoricall, Epiſtolar, Myſticall, and ſo many repetitions; and laſtly it is left to a meer conjecture what may be the meaning of it: Thus *Ruſhworth* Dialog 2. Sect. 2.

Is this the Mathematicall man? Is this the rigour of Mathematicks? This is enough to make a man forſweare the ſtudy of the Mathematicks, if it produce no better demonſtrations: We poor Proteſtants may well be content to ſubmit to the Lawes of theſe men, for you ſee they give Lawes to God himſelfe, and it is allready enacted in the conclave of Rome, that if God do not ſpeak in Mood and Figure he ſhall not be heard, and that if he put forth any Law-book wherein he doth not rigorouſly obſerve the orders and methods of a Syſteme it ſhall not be received: Believe me it was a good turne that Mr *Cowell* Writ his *Inſtitutiones Juris Anglicani*, wherein he reduced the Engliſh Lawes to a Method, for elſe woe had been to the poor Statute-Books and all Records of our Lawes, for as ſure as a club they had been voted to be no Lawes, nor Judges of Controverſies between men and men, for ſo ſaith our Theologicall *Euclide* that ſcornes to ſpeak under a Demonſtration; for we know how much more large a book they make then the Bible, and how many things are mingled unappertaining to the ſubſtance of our eſtates and lives *&c.* The ſumme of the Argument is this: The Scripture was not intended for the Law, becauſe it is ſo large, ſo miſcellaneous, ſo full of repetitions *&c.* Shall I need to ſay any more for the anſwer of ſuch an Argument wherein there is nothing evident, but the diſputers confidence, and the Papiſts credulity, and the deſperateneſſe of their cauſe?

Anſw. 1. If this Argument hold the Old Teſtament or the Pentateuch was no Law to the Jewes, But

this is falſe, and it was a Law to the Jewes, *Ergo*, the principle is falſe from which ſuch a concluſion is deduced: The Major I prove from his own words, and beſides he particularly diſputes againſt the Old Teſtaments being a Law: The Minor I hope I ſhall eaſily prove: Where to prevent equivocation or miſtakes, take notice I meddle not with the ambiguous terme of JUDGE, wee are now diſputing whether it were a Law; nor do I meddle with that queſtion whether it be a Law to us; But to the Jewes: This then I aſſert that the Old Teſtament (notwithſtanding this objection) was a Law to the Jewes, and a man would think the very mention of the propoſition ſhould cut off all neceſſity of proof: It is ſo abſurd and portentous a thing to Chriſtian eares to hear ſo evident and received an Aſſertion queſtioned, I prove it onely by this Argument: That Book by which both people and Prieſts, and Princes of the Jewes were to be guided and ruled and commanded in their deciſions, was certainly a Law to them; But ſuch was the Old Teſtament, 1. For the people it is plaine: They are commanded to obſerve to do all the Words of this Law that are Written in this Book, *Deut.* 28.58. And *Moſes* makes bold to call it a Law-book, notwithſtanding all the mixtures, repetitions, *&c.* and a curſe is pronounced to every one that continued not in all things written in the Book of the Law to do them, *Gal.*3.10. and for the guidance of the people, thoſe Books were to be read by or to the people, *Deut.*31.9. *Joſ.*8.35. *Neh.* 8. and diverſe other places: 2. For the Princes it is no leſſe evident that it was a Law and rule to them, *Joſ.* 1.8. *This Book of the Law ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayeſt obſerve to do according to all that is Written therein*: And Deut. 17. 18, 19. *When he ſitteth upon the Throne—he ſhall Write him a Copy of this Law in a Book out of that which*

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is before the Prieſts the Levites, and he ſhall read therein all the dayes of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord, —to keep all the words of this law and theſe ſtatutes to do them. Thus it is undeniable, it was a Law both to Prince and People, and that is ſufficient to overthrow the whole argument. But I adde 3. It was a law to the Prieſts too. I do not now diſpute whether the people were abſolutely tyed to follow the Prieſts deciſions, (I think the contrary hath been ſufficiently evidenced,) but my preſent aſſertion is onely this, The books of Scripture were a law to the Prieſts, by which they were to be ordered and regulated in their proceedings: The ſentence which the Prieſts were to pronounce, it muſt be the ſentence of the Law, *Deut.* 17.11. and the Prieſts are oft cenſured and condemned for neglecting or tranſgreſſing the Law, which plainly ſhews it was the law and rule of their proceedings.

Anſ. 2. But what ſhall we ſay if the Papiſts themſelves deny their own Concluſion, which here they indeavour *tanto molimine* to prove? You will ſay we have little reaſon to believe thoſe that do not believe themſelves, or to aſſent to that Concluſion which they deny. To make good this, you muſt remember, the queſtion is not about the Judge, properly ſo called, but about the Rule or Law, to which we ſuppoſe the Judge to be tyed: for if the Scriptures had been compiled in the form of a law with the greateſt exquiſiteneſſe, this would not have ſatisfied our Maſters the Jeſuites, but there muſt have been another, and that a living Judge of controverſies. This premiſed, I thus proceed: Either they of the Church of *Rome* have a Law, by which they regulate all their Decrees and deciſions, or they have none: if they ſay, they have none, then they act lawleſly and arbitrarily, and we have found Antichriſt by his character ἄνομος, or *Lawleſſe*, 2 Theſ. 2. but if they ſay, (as they all pretend and profeſſe) they are guided by a law, then I enquire, what that law is?

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Here it is true they are divided, while ſome make the judgment of the antient Church and Fathers their law, others the Popes Decrees, others the Acts of Councels, but all of them pretend ſome law or other, and which opinion ſoever of their Church they take, (for they have good choice,) either their argument hath no force againſt the Scriptures being our Law, or it equally militates againſt their own Laws. As for inſtance: if they make the judgment of the Fathers their Law, are not they lyable to the ſame exceptions with the Scripture, of largeneſſe, aliene mixtures, repetitions, &c? And the like may be ſaid of Popes Decretals. and the Acts of Councels, (which they generally pretend to own as their Law:) and it is no leſſe true of Tradition, of the largeneſſe whereof one may ſay, (as was formerly ſaid of *Livy*,) *Quas mea non totas Bibliotheca capit:* for according to the eſtimate which a learned Author of their own makes, (*Charron* by name,) the Scripture is but *minima pars veritatis revelatæ*, the leaſt part of revealed Truth: He that pleaſeth, may ſee good ſtore of them collected by that great terrour of the Papiſts, *Moulin*, in a Treatiſe of his in French, concerning Traditions. Nay (to put all out of doubt) theſe very men, that argue at this rate, though they do not acquieſce in the Scripture as a Judge, yet they do own it for a Law: they confeſſe the word of God is their rule and law, onely they make (as I may ſay) this law to conſiſt of two Tables, the written and the unwritten Word, which you ſaw the Councel of *Trent* receive with equal piety and reverence. Now certainly they that ſubſcribe to this (as the Papiſts generally do,) they own the Scripture for a Law, though not for a compleat and ſufficient Law: nor doth the inveſting of Tradition with the quality of a Law, deveſt the Scripture of it, any more then the addition of new Acts of Parliament doth derogate the name and authority of a Law from all former Acts and

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ſtatutes, that is, not at all. Much more might be ſaid to ſhew the folly and abſurdity of this argument, but if I ſhould ſpend more words about it, I ſhould both queſtion my own, and too groſly diſtruſt the Readers diſcretion.

And now having done with the Mathematicks, let us come to the Politicks, the beſt argument the Church of *Rome* hath. Politick Mr. *White*, who ſeeing their Scripture arguments in the ſuds, and for the Fathers *pila mixtantia pilis*, comes in to ſuccour a falling cauſe with Politick conſiderations, and moral conjectures, and fine-ſpun probabilities. No man can deny that it was politickly done, when they ſaw their Church could prove nothing, to aſſert, that her bare ſaying was ſufficient, that the teſtimony of the preſent Church, that ſhe holds nothing but what ſhe hath received from Chriſt and the Apoſtles, is ſecurity enough for a Chriſtian's Faith: but this notion I have largely examined, and I hope Mr. *White* will abate ſomething of his confidence in it; therefore I have nothing to do here, but to conſider what he alledgeth againſt the Scriptures being a Rule or Judge of controverſies, and (excepting what hath been before diſcuſſed) I find onely one argument that can pretend to merit any conſideration, and it is delivered by him *pro more* with great confidence and contempt of his Adverſaries. When the Proteſtants ask the queſtion, as well they may, Cannot the Bible make it ſelf be underſtood as well as *Plato* and *Ariſtotle?* (a queſtion which all the wits of the Romane Church, not excluding Mr. *White*, were never able to anſwer,) and thence infer, that the Scripture is ſufficiently intelligible, and able to decide controverſies: Mr. *White*'s anſwer and argument againſt the Scriptures is this: That *this depends upon a moſt falſe ſuppoſition, viz: that the Scripture was written of thoſe controverſies which now are: whereas it is a moſt ſhameleſs propoſition to ſay, the Scriptures*

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were written of the controverſies long after their date, ſprung up in the Chriſtian world: beginning from Geneſis to the Apocalypſe let them name one Book, whoſe Theme is any now controverted Point between Proteſtants and Catholicks. Apology for Tradition, fifteenth Encounter. And conſequently the Scripture is no fit Judge for our controverſies. This, you muſt know, is the argument of another Mathematical Papiſt, who cries out of Proteſtants for reſting in probabilities, yet can ſatisfy himſelf (or at leaſt pretends to do ſo) with ſuch abſurd and improbable ratiocinations. O the power of prejudice or intereſt! (for I cannot tell which it is that blinds ſuch men as Mr. *White.*) Be of good chear, Proteſtants, the Papiſts are upon their laſt legs: you ſee their arguments run very low.

The Anſwer is this in ſhort, (for truly it needs no long nor laborious reply, how much ſoever Mr. *White* is conceited of it.) It is not a moſt ſhameleſſe but a moſt ſhameful propoſition, to ſay the Scripture is unable to decide any of thoſe controverſies, which are ſince ſprung up in the Chriſtian world. Is there any Freſhman in the Univerſity ignorant of this, That *Rectum eſt Index ſui & obliqui*; that the aſſertion of a Truth is ſufficient for the confutation of all contrary errors, whereſoever or whenſoever broached: I may ſay to Mr. *White*, as they did to *Moſes, Wilt thou put out the eyes of theſe men?* Doth Mr. *White* think his Readers would have neither wit nor conſcience? I aske whether thoſe paſſages of Scripture, *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God*, Joh. 1. 1. *who is over all God bleſſed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. *This is the true God and eternal life*, 1 Joh. 5. 20. *Before Abraham was I am*, Joh. 8. 58. do not ſolidly and ſufficiently confute the late ſprung *Socinian* Hereſy, and prove Chriſt's Divinity and præ-exiſtency before his Incarnation? If he ſay no, I will promiſe him hearty thanks (though not from Chriſt, nor peradventure from his Vi-

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far, yet) from all the *Socinians* in the world, and then he would do well to anſwer what *Placæus*, and other of the Proteſtants, or rather (as a demonſtration of the unity of the Romiſh Church) what *Smiglecius* and others of his Brother-Romaniſts have argued from thoſe places, or elſe let him give us the reaſon, why his Brethren ſhould play the knaves, and own and urge thoſe things for ſolid arguments, which they did not think ſo. If he ſay, yea, then down fals all this goodly ſtructure, and Mr. *White* muſt ſeek for a new prop to their declining *Babel*, and Scripture is not unable to decide controverſies of a later Date. Yet again: I will prove Jeſus Chriſt was not of Mr. *White*'s mind, for he thought Scripture (yea even ſuch parts of Scripture as were not written upon thoſe Themes or controverſies, nor deſigned againſt thoſe errors) able to decide ſupervening controverſies. Thus he confutes the Phariſaical opinion about Divorce, from a Text well nigh as old as the Creation of the world, even the inſtitution of marriage, *Math.* 19.4,5,6. So he confutes the error of the Sadduces againſt the reſurrection, from a Scripture long before delivered, (and ſuch an one too as ſeemed to have no reſpect at all to ſuch an Hereſy) *Mat.*22. 29,30, 31,32. May it pleaſe this worthy Gentleman to give us leave without offence to prefer our Saviours opinion before his. I am aſhamed to ſpend time in confuting ſo ſenſleſs a cavil, (but that the reputation of an Author ſometimes makes Non-ſence paſſe for an Argument) I need onely adviſe the Reader to read over the New Teſtament, and (if he have either reaſon or conſcience) it is impoſſible he ſhould be of Mr. *White*'s mind. Did not the Apoſtles decide that controverſie Act. 15. from antient Scriptures, and from ſuch places as ſeem as irrelative to the matter debated, as any which are urged by any conſiderable Proteſtant againſt the Popiſh errors? And why then may not we tread in their ſteps? why may not a

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Proteſtant as well confute the opinion of Juſtification by works (in the Popiſh ſenſe) from that Scripture we conclude we are juſtified by Faith without the works of the Law, as S. *Paul* might and did confute the ſame doctrine (when held by the Jews) from that paſſage of Davids, *Bleſſed is the man whoſe iniquities are forgiven*, Rom. 4. If theſe words long before delivered, *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve*, Deut. 6. 13. were ſufficient to decide the controverſy between Chriſt and the Devil, to confute the opinion of Devil-worſhip, why may not the ſame words as urged by Chriſt be as ſufficient to decide the controverſy between the Papiſts and us, to confute the opinion of Image-worſhip? But I am not at leiſure to tranſcribe all the New Teſtament. I cannot think of Mr. *White* (as it is ſaid of many Popiſh Doctors,) that he never read over the Bible, but I would deſire him once more to read it, and to put on his Spectacles, and then tell me if he be ſtill of the ſame mind. If this will not do, let him reflect upon the Fathers, whether it was not the univerſal practice of the Fathers to confute later Hereſies out of the Scripture: this they did either pertinently or ſolidly, (and then it may be done ſtill,) or impertinently and fallaciouſly, (and then Mr. *White* makes them meer Juglers.) In a word, as upon ſuppoſition that *Ariſtotle* was authentick, and αὐλομισὸς, it were no hard matter out of him to confute all the new opinions of the Modern Philoſophers. So the Scriptures being confeſſedly ſuch, it may ſuffice for the confutation of later Hereſies. Laſtly, if all this will not ſerve turn, it is (to uſe his own words) a *ſhameleſs propoſition*, to ſay the Scripture doth not ſpeak of the matters now in controverſy between us and the Papiſts, and whoever aſſerts it, either underſtands not what he ſaith, or muſt be preſumed never to have read any of our Proteſtant Controvertiſts, who have fully confuted all the Popiſh errors and hereſies from

from expreſs Scriptures, or (which is all one) from genuine conſequences evidently deduced from them. Nor doth it matter at all to ſay, the Scripture treats not of the controverſies at large, ſince it is by all acknowledged, that every part and parcel of Scripture is Canonical and Authentical, and the Papiſts make this the difference between the Divinity of the Scriptures and Conciliary Decrees: That theſe are Divine in the main Concluſion, but not in the premiſes or mediums, but the Scripture they ſay is Divine in all, every verſe, every word being Divine, and conſequently if but one verſe of Scripture ſpeak againſt an error, it doth as ſolidly (though not ſo fully) confute that error, as if a whole Book were written againſt it. For inſtance: that Text, *This is the true God*, if the ſenſe of the words be agreed, (and if they be not, it would do nothing, though an whole Epiſtle were written about it, and ſo far there is no difference) doth as ſubſtantially confute the *Socinian* Hereſy in that point, as a larger Diſcourſe upon it would do, and therefore Mr. *White*'s argument is empty and ineffectual, and muſt go after its fellows. And ſo all their arguments (of any note) againſt the Scriptures being Rule or Judge of controverſies are I hope ſufficiently anſwered, and the Proteſtant doctrine or Truth of Chriſt, viz. The Scripture is a ſufficient rule or judge of controverſies, ſtands like a Rock, at which their Waves are daſhed in pieces.

And now I ſhould come to the other part, by poſitive Scriptures and arguments to prove the Scriptures authority and ſufficiency, but this is fully done by many learned pens, onely becauſe our principal arguments for it are aſſaulted by the Adverſaries I now have to do with, I ſhall therefore conſider their pretenſions againſt the evidence of thoſe places alledged by us in defence of the authority and ſufficiency of the Scriptures, for I am forced by them (againſt my own deſire and inclination) to con-

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found theſe two heads, and treat of them together. I know there are ſeveral Texts rightly urged by the Proteſtants, and vainly cavilled by the Papiſts: but becauſe the handling of this point was not my firſt nor is my main deſign at preſent, and one ſolid argument or convincing Scripture is as good as a thouſand, and both parties are upon the matter willing their cauſe ſhould ſtand or fall by the verdict of one place, as it doth, or doth not convincingly prove the ſufficiency of the holy Scriptures, and becauſe above all places the Romaniſts moſt eagerly combate this, I ſhall therefore more largely inſiſt upon it, and clear up the force and evidence of it, notwithſtanding all the clouds they caſt before it.

The place is 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16. *From a child thou haſt known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wiſe unto Salvation through faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus. All Scripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed to all good works.*

To ingenuous and diſ-intereſted perſons the very reading of theſe words is a ſufficient confutation of the Popiſh opinion: but that you may ſee the Romaniſts have (if no conſcience, yet) ſome wit, they are able to darken the cleareſt Texts, and to perplex what they cannot anſwer. Our arguments from this place are plain and cogent. 1. That which can make a man wiſe unto Salvation is ſufficient for Salvation. 2. That which is ſufficient for the conferring of all thoſe things which are neceſſary to ſalvation, is ſufficient for ſalvation: but ſo is the Scripture. For there are but two things neceſſary to ſalvation, viz. knowledg of the Truth, and practice of righteouſneſs and holineſs.: and for both theſe the Scripture is ſaid to be ſufficient. 3. That which is ſufficient for a man of God or Miniſter, is much more ſufficient for a private Chri-

Christian: but so is the Scripture: *Ergo.*

But let us see what our Adversaries pretend against this evident place: *Excep.* 1 [*It is able indeed, but that is through faith, E. it is not of it self sufficient,* saith our Captain. *It speaks not of making Timothy a Christian by the Bible, (since it supposeth Timothy's being already made a Christian by Paul's institutions* vivâ voce) *but it speaks of the perfecting of his faith, not the first choice of it: and this faith is a belief of Christian verities delivered by Oral Tradition,* saith Mr. *Cressy* sect. 2. cap. 6. And consonantly to him Mr. *White* thus glosseth upon the place: *The Scriptures will contribute to thy salvation, so that thou understand them according to the faith of Jesus Christ, which I have orally delivered unto thee.* Apology for Tradition, Sixteenth Encounter.

Ans. 1. The necessity of Faith is no argument of the Scriptures insufficiency. The Scripture is sufficient, i. e. *in genere objecti,* in respect of the object, or doctrine, or revelation, and yet Faith is necessary *in genere instrumenti,* as an instrument, (for it is plain enough, the faith he speaks of is the grace, not the doctrine of Faith.) By this argument Scripture and Tradition together were no perfect rule, for both will not make a man wise unto salvation otherwise then through faith.

Ans. 2. It is falsly supposed, and can never be proved, That the Faith here spoken of is the *fides quæ creditur,* or the doctrine of Faith, not *fides quâ creditur,* or the grace of Faith, and that by Faith are here intended Christian Verities, delivered by Oral Tradition from St. *Paul,* or the other Apostles: and this Supposition is the Basis of their Answer. The contrary sufficiently appears from diverse considerations. 1. This contradicts the Apostles scope, which apparently is to commend the Scriptures, as able to make wise to Salvation &c. But this were no commendation at all to say, they together with such Christian verities are sufficient for salvation; for according to

this argument it might be ſaid of any one verſe in all the Old Teſtament, what is here ſaid of all the Scriptures, viz. That that Verſe together with Faith, i. e. with the Chriſtian verities delivered by Oral Tradition, is ſufficient for Salvation, which no Papiſt will deny: and therefore that Anſwer is abſurd.

2. *Timothy's* faith here ſuppoſed, is of the ſame kind with the Faith of his Mother and Grandmother, 2 Tim. 1. 5. *When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt firſt in thy Grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice.* Was the faith of his Grandmother too the Chriſtian Verities delivered by Oral Tradition from the Apoſtles after ſhe was dead?

3. It is not ſaid, *The Scriptures are able—with the faith*, but *through the faith*; not σὺν πίστει, but διὰ πίστεως, which plainly ſhews, that this Faith is not another object diſtinct from the Scriptures, but an inſtrument to apply the Scriptures; eſpecially if we conſider a parallel place, Heb. 4. 2. *The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith*, i. e. with the grace of Faith: for none can be ſo ſenſeleſſe, as to think they were damned for want of oral Tradition.

4. The Faith here ſpoken of is together with the Scriptures ſufficient for ſalvation: and ſo is the grace of faith: But the Dogmatical belief of Chriſtian Verities deliver'd by Tradition, together with the Scriptures, is not ſufficient for Salvation, as the Papiſts confeſſe: *E.* the grace of Faith is the thing here ſpoken of.

5. The Faith here ſpoken of is a thing diſtinct and totally differing from the Scriptures, and not at all coincident with them. But the Chriſtian Verities or Traditions delivered by the Apoſtles were not things ſo different, but coincident with the Scripture, as evidently appears from *Act.* 26. 22. where S. Paul *in terminis* profeſſeth, *he ſaid* (preached) *none other things, then thoſe which the Prophets and*

and Moſes did ſay ſhould come. But I would have you to wit, that the Church of *Rome* know what *Paul* preached better then himſelf: a plain evidence of their Infallibility.

Exc. 2. *By this argument the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament* (for of them he ſpeaks) *are ſufficient for ſalvation, and ſo the New Teſtament is not neceſſary.* So the Captain p. 29. and Creſſy *ubi ſuprà.*

Anſ. 1. It is very true, the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament were in thoſe times ſufficient for ſalvation: This appears from the place now cited, *Act.* 26.22. compared with *Act.* 20. 27. where S. Paul ſaith, *he delivered the whole counſel of God* Hence I argue: The whole counſel of God was delivered by S. *Paul,* and is ſufficient for ſalvation: but all that S. *Paul* delivered was in *Moſes* and in the Prophets, *Act.*26.22. If the Old Teſtament was deficient in any doctrine, it was that which the New Teſtament ſeems to ſupply, viz. the doctrine of Chriſt, and yet the Old Teſtament was ſufficient to teach Chriſt; for it did both inſtruct men about the Perſon, and Office, and work of the Meſſias, (as our Divines do abundantly prove againſt the Jews, to whom I refer the Reader for the proof of it) and alſo did ſufficiently prove that Jeſus was the Chriſt, as appears undeniably from *Act.* 18. 28. and conſequently there was no defect, but a ſufficiency (for that time and condition of affairs) even in the old Teſtament in things neceſſary to ſalvation.

A Third Exception they take againſt our argument from this place is, *That it ſpeaks onely of perfection after faith, but here is no queſtion about the firſt choice of faith, much leſſe is there any mention of convincing* in foro contentioſo) *about which is all our controverſy.* Thus Mr. *White's* Apology for Tradition, 16. Encounter.

Anſ. Since then all our controverſy is about that, whether the Scriptures are ſo convincing, it will be worth our while to examine the point; for it is not my deſire to catch

at little advantages, but to attaque the Averſary in his ſtrongeſt Fort.

But before I come to the proof, let us inquire into the meaning of the Phraſe, What it is for the Scripture to be convincing *in foro contentioſo*, i. e. in way of diſputation. I take it for granted, he is not ſo abſurd as to expect that the ſcripture ſhould be ſo convincing, as actually to convince, and ſatisfy, and ſilence the moſt importunate and unreaſonable Caviller. In that ſenſe the cleareſt demonſtration in the Mathematicks is not convincing: but without doubt Mr. *White* takes his Apology, and ſo his Treatiſe *de fide*, and Mr. *Ruſhworths* Dialogues to be convincing Diſcourſes, becauſe though they do not actually convince the ſtubborn Hereticks, yet they are *apta nata* to convince them, there is ſo much evidence in them, as may and ought to ſatisfy any underſtanding, unconcerned, inquiſitive, and prudent adverſary: and in this ſenſe I do aſſert, that the ſcriptures are convincing *in foro contentioſo*, (which is the great thing Mr. *White* ſticks at:) I prove it thus.

1. The ſcriptures make a man of God, i.e. the Miniſter (as they acknowledg) perfect, and throughly furniſhed to every work: but this is one of his chief works, to convince Gain-ſayers, *Tit.* 1. 9. Ergo ſcripture furniſheth him with convincing arguments.

2. The Scripture is here expreſſely ſaid to be profitable among other things for Conviction, πρὸς ἔλεγχον, firſt *for doctrine*, i.e. for the confirmation of Truths, then *for conviction*, (for ſo the Greek word more properly ſignifies then *for reproof*, which is mentioned in the next particular, *for correction*) or for refutation of errors. But ſurely Scripture were not profitable for conviction, if it be inſufficient to attain that end, and be unconvincing: nay more, Scripture is not profitable for doctrine, if it onely beget conjectures and opinions, and doth not give

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ſolid and ſatisfying evidence of its doctrines: and if it do evidently aſſert or prove a Truth, it muſt by conſequence as evidently convince and confute the contrary error. For example: if any Scripture poſitively aſſert, that Chriſt is the true God, and equal with the Father, (as *de facto* it doth,) doth not the ſame Scripture ſufficiently convince even *in foro contentioſo* the *Socinian* Hereticks, who make Chriſt but a Creature, and inferior to the Father? Neither let him tell me of their cavils againſt ſuch places, for ſo *Anaxagoras* did cavill againſt thoſe that ſaid Snow was white, (and gave a reaſon for it, ſaith *Tully*, becauſe the water of which it had its riſe was black,) yet no man I think will deny, that there is convincing evidence (even in *foro contentioſo*) of its whiteneſſe.

3. The Scripture was convincing formerly, and therefore it is ſo ſtill, (for I do not know that it hath loſt any of its vertue.) Chriſt proved himſelf to be the Meſſias out of the Scriptures in ſundry places, and I think Mr. *White* will not deny, that all Chriſt's arguments were convincing. So Chriſt proves his Lordſhip and Divinity out of the Scriptures, and I think convincingly, (for his Adverſaries were not able to anſwer him a word,) out of the Pſalmes. Read *Mat.* 22. 42. &c. When *Peter* and *Paul* diſputed againſt the Jewes out of the Scripture, and proved (as they did) out of the ſcriptures, that Jeſus whom they crucified was Lord and Chriſt; I would know, whether their ſcripture-proofs were ſolid and convincing, or no: if they deny it, they make the Apoſtles deceivers, and wreſters of the ſcriptures; if they affirm, then ſcripture is convincing. Once more: we read *Act.* 18. 28. of *Apollos*, that he mightily convinced the Jewes, ſhewing by the ſcriptures that Jeſus was the Chriſt. I am aſhamed to mention more arguments in ſo clear a cauſe: and yet we muſt believe theſe men againſt our ſenſes, and reaſon, and conſcience, that the ſcriptures are not able to convince

men *in foro contentioſo*; and Mr. *White* (who ſometimes writes as if he believed an everlaſting ſtate) dares hazard it upon ſuch falſe and frivolous ſuppoſitions.

Excep. 4. *This word* (*All Scripture*) *muſt ſignify either every Scripture, as the Original word* πᾶς *ought to be rendred,* (*and then all Scripture ſave one Book is uſeleſſe,*) *or all the Scriptures that ever were,* (*and then we have them not,*) *or all that were then written,* (*and then all ſince written are ſuperfluous,*) *or all that we now have.* Epiſt. pag. 29. 30.

Anſ. The Text ſpeaks not of every ſcripture, but of all the ſcriptures that then were. As for the word πᾶς two things are evident enough:

1. That it may be taken collectively, and the uſe of the word will warrant it. I ſee the Captain is grown a Græcian, therefore I ſhall deſire him to look onely into two places which his maſters the Rhemiſts intepret *collectivè*, not *diſtributivè:* Mat. 8. 32. πᾶσα ἀγέλη *the whole herd*, not *every herd*, and πᾶσα πόλις *the whole city*, v. 34.

2. That it muſt be ſo taken here, our Adverſaries being judges: for elſe this confeſſed inconvenience will follow, That any one verſe of the Scripture is profitable and ſufficient to all theſe purpoſes: nor doth it at all follow, that all the reſt are ſuperfluous, becauſe not preciſely neceſſary. The Pentateuch alone was a ſufficient law for the Jewes, yet none will ſay the Books of the Prophets concerning the explication or application of that Law were ſuperfluous.

Excep, 5. *He ſayes not the Scriptures are ſufficient, but onely profitable.* Creſſy.

Anſ. 1. He ſaith they are profitable πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθόν, *for every good work*, and what is ſo, is undoubtedly ſufficient.

2. He ſaith they are profitable, ſo far as to make one wiſe to ſalvation, and I think that is ſufficient.

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3. He saith, they are profitable to the producing of all things necessary to salvation, which are acknowledged to be onely two, Faith, and Life, and they are profitable to both of them: 1 for doctrine, i. the demonstration of the Truth, 2. for conviction or reproof, i.e. the confutation of errors: 3. for correction, i.e. the reproof of sins: 4. for instruction in righteousnesse, or the discovery of Duties. And what is thus every way profitable, cannot with any colour be charged with insufficiency.

Excep. 6. *It is a clear case, the Apostle speaks of the benefit of Scripture, when explicated and applyed by a Preacher.*

Ans. 1. By this argument all these high and various *elogiums*, which are here so emphatically given to *all the Scripture*, do as truly belong to any one verse of Scripture. By this, those two words, *Dic Ecclesiæ*, Tell the Church, are able to make one wise to salvation, and furnished to every good work &c. for so they are or may be (through God's blessing) if explicated and applied by an able preacher. So those words, *Abraham begat Isaac*, are able to all these mentioned purposes, viz. if explicated and applyed. So you see the Church of *Rome* is grown superlatively orthodox, for they who ere while would not allow all the Scripture to be sufficient, are now so abundantly satisfied in the point, that they allow any one verse in the Bible (not excluding, *Tobit went, and his dog followed him*) to be sufficient.

This, I hope, may suffice for the vindication of this Text, wherein I have been the larger, because it is most plain and impregnable to our purpose, and sufficient of it self to decide the whole controversy. I shall not concern my selfe, or trouble the Reader with the vindication of other Texts to the same purpose, (which are many, and considerable, and with great facility defensible against all the Romish assaults,) because to him that submits to the authority and self-evidencing light of this Text, that labour

bour is superfluous; and to him, whose Conscience will suffer his wit to quarrel against such forcible and clear expressions, and arguments, as this Text affords, it is fruitraneous. And therefore upon the evidence that hath been delivered, I shall take the boldnesse to conclude, That not the Church, but the Scripture is the sufficient Rule and Infallible Guide, by which we are to be regulated in all things pertaining to Faith or Godlinesse.

FINIS.